

THE STRUCTURE AND MEANING
OF BOOKS III AND IV OF THE 'FAERIE QUEENE'



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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

Part One: A brief review of the Rose tradition; gardens of paradise; Chaucer's influence on Spenser

Part Two: Alma's House in book II; its relevance to books III and IV

CHAPTER 1 Castle Joyous 63

- i. Castle Joyous in relation to other episodes
- ii. Malecasta as a false Venus Pandemos; comparison with Chaucer's Parliament of Fowls
- iii. Alma's House and Malecasta's Parlor
- iv. Malecasta's tepestries of Venus and Adonis
- v. Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis
- vi. Art and nature in the Faerie Queene

CHAPTER 2 Garden of Adonis 99

- i. The Chrysogone generation
- ii. Garden of Adonis; nature's generation and decay; fleshly eternity

CHAPTER 3 House of Busyrane 124

- i. Alma's "turret" and the House of Busyrane
- ii. Elizabethan psychology
- iii. The stages of delusion: Britomart's journey through Amoret's mind
- iv. The House of Busyrane and the Apocryphal book of Tobit

CHAPTER 4 Minor Episodes 165

| | | |
|------------|--|-----|
| CHAPTER 5 | Seasonal Cycles | 173 |
| i. | Florimell's seasonal allegory and the unification of books III and IV. | |
| ii. | The four-part seasonal cycle | |
| CHAPTER 6 | Florimell's Seasonal Stages | 195 |
| i. | Spring equinox: the beginning of Florimell's cycle | |
| ii. | Witch's cabin: summer solstice and Florimell's analogous cycle | |
| iii. | Sea change: Proteus and the autumnal equinox; Florimell's analogous stage in the seasonal cycle | |
| iv. | Proteus' dungeon: winter solstice and Florimell's corresponding stage in the seasonal cycle | |
| CHAPTER 7 | Book IV: Some Structural Speculations | 260 |
| CHAPTER 8 | Friendship | 270 |
| i. | Friendship as the highest love | |
| ii. | Canto one of book IV: a microcosm of the synthesis of books III and IV; Amoret, Ate | |
| CHAPTER 9 | Friendship in Conflict with Love | 286 |
| i. | Canto two of book IV: the battle of Cambel and the "brothers" in relation to Chaucer's "Knight's Tale" | |
| ii. | Agape and the tripartite "unfolding" of love; the battle in the "lists" as productive of two kinds of eternity: fleshly and spiritual | |
| CHAPTER 10 | Masculine and Feminine Trials | 320 |
| i. | The mutual accord of Cambel and Triamond; their function as "double mean terms"; eternal flesh and eternal spirit in harmony; Cambel and Triamond as "means" toward the love of Britomart and Artegall | |

- ii. The reconciliation of Britomart and
Artegall in canto six
- iii. Minor episodes: cantos seven, eight,
nine; a shift from mysticism to romance

CHAPTER 11 Scudamour and the Temple of Venus341

CONCLUSION360

Part One: The Thames-Medway marriage and the
cosmic images of land and sea;
Thames- Medway and the marriage of
books III and IV

Part Two: A brief consideration of Spenser's
influence generally; on Shakespeare;
on Milton

ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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THE STRUCTURE AND MEANING OF BOOKS III AND IV OF THE 'FAERIE QUEENE'

Books III and IV of Spenser's Faerie Queene construct an intricate philosophy of love involving the association of feminine with matter and masculine with form, or spirit. As a Christian, Spenser recognized the polarization of spirit and flesh and sought to sanctify human love by arguing that the marriage of man and woman represents a reformation of the polarities of divided human nature: indeed, that man and women bring spiritual and material gifts, respectively, to one another. Women provide material generation and a lineage which is eternal through change. Men add spiritual and intellectual purpose which transcends both flesh and time.

In constructing his love-philosophy Spenser draws on many traditional sources. The imagery of books III and IV suggests such diverse poems as the Roman de la Rose and the Divine Comedy. But it is to Chaucer that he owes his greatest debt. He accepts the premises of the "Franklin's Tale;" the necessary mutual renunciation of mastery in love and the suggestion that the divine superiority of man need not be threatened by a marriage founded on principles of equality. In the Faerie Queene the best marriages are those which pay heed to Chaucer's solution. But Spenser developed these doctrines even further. If lovers unite equally with one another they will avoid impediments to their love, as Chaucer observed: they will be happy because they have made virtue of necessity. But where Chaucer argued for the necessity of worldly happiness founded on expediency, Spenser imagined the vaster implications of the reformation of divided human nature. When lovers follow Chaucer's solution they are actually capable of merging together as one flesh: marriage provides the basis for this harmony, this synthesis, of the opposites of man and woman. Each partner provides the strengths the other lacks; each becomes complete in and through the other.

One may deduce the major tenets of Spenser's love-philosophy by noting the structural foundations of these books, and by seeing how these function in relation to specific patterns of imagery. The philosophy is dualistic. But its major doctrine stresses the eventual harmony, the Oneness, of all things no matter how opposed. Even books III and IV themselves fit this pattern by being two distinguishable parts of a wholly integrated and unified argument. The Florimell story provides a unity of time for these books. Her "chase" begins in the first canto of book III and concludes in the last canto of book IV, taking the space of one year. As we trace Florimell through her seasonal cycle we find proof that books III and IV together take up the same amount of time as any other single book. Another kind of structural unity is provided by canto structures. In book III there are four stressed cantos: 1, 6, 11 and 12. These are transposed into book IV where they are stressed as a complement to the major cantos of that embracing book. The unity

of books III and IV can be further illustrated by the fact that book III begins with images of separation and opposition which eventually give way to images of concord and assimilation in book IV. It is no accident that book III begins with the scene depicting Florimell's flight from the Foster, and book IV concludes with the image of Florimell and Marinell coming together in harmony.

The two-part structure of the love debate symbolizes the polarization of divided human nature. In book III the poet explores the feminine nature whose excess and defect are lust (Castle Joyous) and mindlessness (House of Busyrane) and whose excellence resides in material generation yielding eternity through change. In book IV Spenser discusses the masculine nature whose excess is chaotic strife, whose defect is inactivity, and whose excellence is manifested in the directed activity which yields a spiritual eternity beyond time.

At first it might appear that Spenser has separated male and female into an irreconcilable polarity. In book III the feminine nature is threatened by masculine lust, or indifference; just as the feminine land is threatened by the masculine sea. But the intricacy of the philosophy is such that there is ample provision for the synthesis of these opposites in book IV. Although book IV symbolizes the masculine nature, it clearly embraces the feminine nature as well by absorbing the stories, themes, images, and canto structures of book III. When the Thames and Medway join in marriage they sanctify the marriage of sea and land, masculine and feminine, books IV and III, and all the attendant polarities therein.

INTRODUCTION PART ONE

i

In his study of Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser Robert Ellrodt noted the syncretic nature of Renaissance Platonism:

The syncretic nature of Renaissance Platonism is well known and requires no further emphasis. Zoroaster, Pythagoras, "thrice-great Hermes", the Orphic hymns, the Cabbala and Arab philosophy entered into it, together with Plato and Plotinus. Far from being exiled from the new Platonic Republic of philosophers, Aristotle was reconciled with Plato by thinkers like Pico and Leone Ebreo. All known systems of philosophy were tortured into harmony by the minds of men more alive to likenesses than sensitive to discrepancies; and the whole was loosely related to Christianity. That seething mass of confused thinking will be referred to as Neoplatonism.¹

Ellrodt's observations might easily apply to the whole of the Renaissance itself when, as Seznec demonstrates, artists were actively concerned with creating a pagan and Christian synthesis:

. . . just because a "pagan" cult of life is now being professed, [i.e., in the Renaissance] with the gods as its incarnation, the need is felt of bringing that cult into line with the spiritual values of Christianity - reconciling the two worlds. Humanism and art appear, for a brief moment, to have succeeded in accomplishing this result; the Renaissance, in its moment of flowering, is this synthesis - or rather, this fragile harmony. But the equilibrium is disturbed after only a few decades. The sixteenth century, as it advances, is forced to avow the disaccord which it thought had been successfully hidden. An era of crisis and reaction then dawns. The gods no longer arouse the same sentiments. Zeal is succeeded by admiration grown reticent and over-scrupulous; intoxication with beauty, by a cold archaeological interest, by scholarly curiosity. From being

1. Robert Ellrodt, "Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser," Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance, XXXV, (1960), 9.

objects of love, the gods are transformed into a subject of study.²

Anyone who has read the Faerie Queene will, doubtless, suffer little difficulty in placing Spenser within the syncretic Renaissance context, as it has been described: Spenser was certainly a "man of his times." The poem, itself, seems a curious synthesis of epic and romance. The philosophical themes of Greece and Rome mingle with the poet's own Christian sentiments, the medieval sentiments of "court of love" poetry form a loose union with Petrarchan and Neoplatonic love themes, and all these elements mingle freely with the poet's own Puritan ethics. Even the language of the poem is a synthesis of medieval and Renaissance diction.³

As Ellrodt has sensibly demonstrated, reading Spenser involves a keen understanding of the poet's aesthetic uses of commonplace sentiments. Spenser commonly employed Neoplatonic philosophy as a complement to his Christianity, and thought it no contradiction nor heresy. His two Hymnes to Love and Beauty stand side by side with his later Hymnes to Heavenly Love and Beauty as a monument to his belief in the aesthetic harmony of these doctrines. Whether or not he is sincere in rejecting the earlier hymnes, or has marked them with death, as Enid Welsford claims, is beside the point.⁴ What is significant is that the Four Hymnes

2. Jean Seznec, The Survival of the Pagan Gods: the Mythological Tradition and its Place in Renaissance Humanism and Art, trans. Barbara F. Sessions, 2nd ed., Bollingen series XXXVIII (New York, 1953), pp. 320-321.
3. See W.L. Renwick, Edmund Spenser: an Essay on Renaissance Poetry (London: Edward Arnold, 1925). I have used the University Paperback reprint (London: Methuen, 1964).
4. Enid Welsford, Spenser: Four Hymnes; Epithalamion. A Study of Edmund Spenser's Doctrine of Love (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967), p. 48.

stand together as a group. If the poet of the third and fourth books of the Faerie Queene does not turn his back on the mortal flesh, (as I shall prove), nor deny the validity of human love, it is likely that his nature would not allow him to repudiate the sentiments supposedly penned in "the greener time of . . . youth."⁵ His letter in Preface to the Hymnes is a clear enough indication that his "repudiation" of the earlier poems betrays not so much a change of heart, as a politic submission to the ordinary exigencies of patronage:-

But being vnable to recall the earlier poems . . . by reason that many copies thereof were formerly scattered abroad, I resolved at least to amend, and by way of retraction to reforme them, making in stead of those two Hymnes of earthly or naturall love and beautie, two others of heavenly and celestiall. The which I doe dedicate ioyntly vnto you two honorable sisters, . . . 6

What but patronage could explain the poet's writing in such direct contradiction to these sentiments when he published, in the same year as the Hymnes, the fourth book of the Faerie Queene?

Indeed, he rejects the sentiments of the letter prefacing the Hymnes (which began:-

Hauing in the greener times of my youth, composed these former two Hymnes . . . and finding that the same too much pleased those of like age and disposition, which being too vehemently caried with that kind of affection, do rather sucke out poyson to their strong passion, then hony to their honest delight, . . .) 7

when he takes up the fourth book:-

5. Edmund Spenser, The Poetical Works of Edmund Spenser, ed. J. C. Smith and E. de Selincourt (London: Oxford University Press, 1912), p. 586. I have used the 1966 reprint. All references to Spenser will cite this edition.
6. Spenser, ed. Smith and Selincourt, p. 586.
7. Spenser, p. 586.

The rugged forehead that with graue foresight
Welds kingdomes causes, and affaires of state,
My looser rimes (I wote) doth sharply wite,
For praising loue, as I haue done of late,
And magnifying louers deare debate;
By which fraile youth is oft to follie led,
Through false allurements of that pleasing baite,
That better were in vertues discipl'd,
Then with vaine poemes weeds to haue their fancies
fed.

Such ones ill iudge of loue, that cannot loue,
Ne in their frozen hearts feelee kindly flame:
For thy they ought nō thing vnknowne reprove,
Ne naturall affection faultlesse blame,
For fault of few that haue abused the same.
For it of honor and all vertue is
The roote, and brings forth glorious flowres of
fame,
That crowne true louers with immortall blis,
The meed of them that loue, and do not liue amisse. 8

Love, human and divine, is of great importance to the third and fourth books of the Faerie Queene. And as we explore Spenser's love debate we shall find many references to the old gods, and the mythologies from ancient times, to pagan philosophies, and to semi-pagan codes of love. But, in true Renaissance fashion, the poet manages to weave all of these diverse threads into a vast tapestry. If he sings to us:-

Of Tourneys and of Trophies hung,
Of Forests, and enchantments drear,

we are forced to agree with Milton that:-

. . . more is meant than meets the ear.⁹

Indeed, it is the mark of Spenser's greatness that when the melancholy seventeenth century began to turn on the harsh

8. Spenser, Faerie Queene (4. proem, 1-2.)

9. John Milton, The Complete Poems and Major Prose, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (New York: the Odyssey Press, 1957) p. 75.

light of reason and skepticism, Spenser's love synthesis remained a compelling and meaningful poetical doctrine.¹⁰

10. I argue the importance of Spenser's love-philosophy on Shakespeare and Milton in the concluding chapter.

The success of Spenser's endeavor to construct a viable synthesis of these various philosophies, codes, and ethics, in harmony with Christianity is the result of the continuity of a traditional medieval thought and expression which characterizes his poetry. It is obvious, of course, that Spenser wrote the language of the poem in a medieval idiom; but even a brief reading will suggest that he borrowed more than language from the Middle Ages. Much traditional mythology is evident in the poetry of Spenser. Douglas Bush has said that

The Elizabethan author . . . was, in his treatment of mythology and his general mental habit, nearer to 1400 than to 1700. 11

But even so, Spenser's involvement in the earlier periods (and certainly his use of mythology) was probably greater than most of the poets and artists of his time. Again, Bush confirms that

No English poet has employed myth in more various ways than Spenser . . . 12

As Seznec has argued, most Renaissance poets and artists consulted one or another of the encyclopedias of mythology which were easily available.¹³ The compilers of these mythologies were reticent to acknowledge their debts to the mythologies they, themselves, had consulted and often used

11. Douglas Bush, Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition in English Poetry (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1932), p. 90.
12. Bush, p. 91.
13. Seznec, Survival of the Pagan Gods, pp. 279-323.

extensively; and their silence was passed on to the artists who used these works, as well. It is therefore somewhat difficult to assert that an artist used any special work or edition of one of the popular mythologies. One can safely assume, however, that Spenser would have known of many of them. Perhaps he had several favorites.¹⁴

However, Spenser's mythology is as involved as it is learned, and we must be careful to notice the poet's own usages of mythology: it is often better to recognize certain internal consistencies, rather than to freely consult external sources which "touch" on only limited matters, and which may or may not be relevant.¹⁵

Spenser's involvement in mythology certainly aids him in advancing his debate of love. By employing traditional myths he is effectively using a language, or perhaps, a hieroglyphic code which had undergone an important development in Christian Europe throughout the Middle Ages. And one of the major roles of this mythology was to effect a synthesis of Christian and pagan philosophy and literature. The Ovid Moralize tradition is a case in point.¹⁶ The bestial loves of the gods, their crimes, and their jealous quarrels were

14. Spenser's use of Boccaccio's Genealogia Deorum is arguable because of his use of Demogorgon. For examples, see (Faerie Queene, l. 5.22. and 4.2.47.). See also Seznec, The Survival of the Pagan Gods, p. 312.

15. In a later chapter I argue that internal iconography, i.e., an iconography confirmed elsewhere in the Faerie Queene itself, proves that the dragon of Cupid's statue in the House of Busyrane (3.11.47-49.) represents the conquered animal appetites. C.S. Lewis had argued that the dragon symbolizes the defeated guardian of chastity, but his theory depends on external sources to a great extent. See C.S. Lewis, Spenser's Images of Life, ed. Alastair Fowler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp. 22-26.

16. Seznec, The Survival of the Pagan Gods, pp. 92-93.

all embraced by the amazingly adaptable cast of Christian mysticism. Consequently, the amours of the gods took on genuinely divine implications through the ingenuity of the allegorists. Throughout the Middle Ages, mythology developed into a learned language of love: both human and divine. And by using this language, and adapting it to his own times, Spenser was capable of creating the last great poem to continue this medieval tradition.

In the third and fourth books, where Spenser evolves his theory of human love, we shall discover that the image of the "earthly" paradise dominates the discussion. We have the Garden of Adonis in the sixth canto of book three (at the precise center of the book); and the Temple of Venus in the tenth canto of book four (ten being a number of perfection).¹⁷ The earthly paradise is a biblical image which was developed in the Middle Ages, and which Spenser transports to the very roots of his love debate. Of course, both of the poet's own "gardens" in these books differ from the more traditional ones because of his freedom to assimilate this material and transform it to suit his purposes. The Renaissance poet may be closer to fourteen hundred than seventeen hundred, but he has more flexibility and is bound less by his material than his medieval counterpart.

17. Vincent Foster Hopper, Medieval Number Symbolism: Its Sources, Meaning, and Influence on Thought and Expression, Columbia University Studies in English and Comparative Literature, no. 132 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), pp. 33-50.

A brief and summary review of some principle sources for the gardens of paradise will enable us to understand the significances behind the poet's borrowings, as well as the reasons for his deviations from the tradition. And further, the implied distinction between "earthly" and "spiritual" gardens of human and divine love will begin to suggest an integral part of Spenser's own theory of love.

The tradition can be easily traced. For the sake of brevity I shall cite the Bible, the Roman de la Rose, the Divine Comedy, and some poems from the Works of Chaucer.

One may assume Eden to be behind much of the imagery of Spenser's gardens, just as it was the forerunner of most medieval gardens of love. Citing directly from the Genesis we find most of the imagery which was to become traditional in the Middle Ages. There is the sense of a central point in the Garden - where there is a tree or fountain, leading either to "life" or "death." There are streams and trees:-

Then the Lord God planted a garden in Eden
away to the east, and there he put the man whom he
had formed. The Lord God made trees spring from
the ground, all trees pleasant to look at and
good for food; and in the middle of the garden he
set the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge
of good and evil.

There was a river flowing from Eden to water the
garden, and when it left the garden it branched
into four streams . . . 18

Because of the Fall from grace woman is cursed by having to suffer her husband's mastery. Before the Fall Adam and

18. The New English Bible: With the Apocrypha (London: Oxford University Press & Cambridge University Press, 1970), Genesis 2: 8-11. All references to the Bible will cite this edition.

Eve must have acted equally toward one another because their sin occasions this punishment on Eve:-

I will increase your labour and your groaning,
and in labour you shall bear children.
You shall be eager for your husband,
and he shall be your master. 19

The insistence on woman's subservient role continues into the New Testament, where Paul's thoughts on the subject are famous - or infamous, if we accept the Wife of Bath's opinion. For Paul clearly places woman below man in the hierarchy.²⁰

Spenser's third and fourth books endeavor to reform the earthly relationships between man and woman along equitable lines, while still retaining the hierarchy which places man above woman. To a great extent, he advances his philosophy by creating visions of a reformed Eden. Let us continue the examination of earthly paradises with, perhaps, the most important example of all: the two gardens from the Roman de la Rose. In the contrasting gardens of this poem a distinction is made between earthly and spiritual loves. The gardens contain many of the same features and are alike in several ways: for example, in the fountains and trees at the centers, the walls enclosing the gardens, the images painted on the outsides of the walls, and so on. While all of these features are similar, they are in no way identical. In each case there is a subtle difference between them which makes one earthly and mortal, and the other divine. Genius'

19. Genesis 3:16. The Genesis confirms the inferiority of woman by the simple account of the birth of Eve from Adam. Yet, while Adam and Eve enjoyed God's blessing, Eve's inferiority was not, apparently, evident.

20. 1. Corinthians 11: 2-15; Ephesians 5: 22-33.

comparison of the lover's garden with the Shepherd's Park
is to the point:-

Or au jardin nous en ralons
E des choses cedenz palons.
Il vit, ce dit, seur l'erbe fresche
Deduit qui demenait sa tresche,
E ses genz o lui querolanz
Seur les flouretes bien olanz;
E vit, ce dit li damoiseaus,
Erbes, arbres, bestes, oiscaus,
E ruisselez e fonteneles
Bruire e fremir par les graveles,
E la fontaine souz le pin;
E se vante que puis Pepin
Ne fu teus pins; e la fontaine
Restait de trop grant beaute pleine.
Pour Deu, seigneur, prenez ci garde:
Qui bien la verite regarde,
Les choses ici contenues,
Ce sont trufles e fanfelues.
Ci n'a chose qui seit estable,
Quangu'l i vit est corrompable.
Il vit queroles qui faillirent,
E faudront tuit cil que les firent.
Ausinc feront toutes les choses
Qu'il vit par tout laiencz encloses;
Car la nourrice Cerberus,
A cui ne peut riens embler us
Humains que tout ne face user,
Quant el veaut de sa force user,
E senz lasser toujourz en use,
Atropos, qui riens ne refuse,
Par darriers touz les espoit,
Fors les deus, se nul en i ot;
Car, senz faille, choses divines
Ne sont pas a la mort enclines. ²¹

Thus, the earthly garden with its earthly love leads
untimately to death because, in a sense, this life is a
kind of death which must be discarded before the soul
can reascend to heaven and take part in "All things

21. Guillaume de Lorris et Jean de Meun, Le Roman de la Rose, Publie d'apres le manuscrits par Ernest Langlois, 5 vols. (Paris: Librairie Ancienne Edouard Champion, 1924), 11. 20335-20368, vol. 5, pp. 39-40.

delightful, and true, and durable." ²² As Genius continues he describes the spiritual garden:-

Mais or parlons des beles choses
Qui sont en ce bel parc encloses:

. . .

Trestoutes choses delitables
E veraies e pardurables
Ont cil qui laienz se deduisent . . .

(R.R. 11. 20369-20370;
20383-20385, pp. 40-41.)

Indeed, the fountain of the Shepherd's Park:

Ce n'est pas cele desouz l'arbre,
Qu'il vit en la pierre de marbre.
L'en li devrait faire la moe
Quant il cele fontaine loe.
C'est la fontaine perilleuse,
Tant amere e tant venimeuse
Qu'el tua le bel Narcissus
Quant il se mirait iqui sus.

(R.R. 11. 20405-20412,
pp. 42.)

But instead, this water in the Shepherd's Park bestowes life:-

Ne jamais nus on ne mourrait
Qui beivre une feiz on pourrait.

(R.R. 11. 20403-20404,
p. 42.)

In both gardens we have found love: in Sir Mirth's garden the love is symbolized by the foolish Narcissus whose own outward semblance caused him to look ever downward - like some "urchin-snouted boar" ²³ - and thus perish without the fulfilment of his love. The reflection of his face symbolizes the flesh (and the material world) which is only an image of an image, and which is destined to vanish away

22. Roman de la Rose, ed. Langlois, ll. 20383-85, p. 41.

23. The image of the "urchin-snouted boar" comes from Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis, stanza 185, l. 1105.

in death. There is no certainty in this world, or in the love of this world, for the individual must perish.

Narcissus becomes an image of the futility of earthly love.

In the Shepherd's Park we find a spiritual love which yields permanence for the individual soul. Certainly, Jean's message is that man must pin his hopes not on earthly love, which alone yields permanence. But, in spite of this, Jean was no ascetic, and he believed each kind of love to be valid so long as one recognized the hierarchy which has been imposed on man since the Fall. Jean does not council us to turn our backs on the garden of Sir Mirth, any more than Spenser is serious in rejecting the "earlier" Hymnes. Indeed, in order to argue convincingly that man and woman should reform their natures along equitable lines in marriage, Spenser will associate woman with earthly love and beauty, and man with a higher and more spiritual love and beauty, in an attempt to show that the union of man and woman imitates a synthesis of earth and heaven: of material lineage and spiritual transcendence.²⁴ However, Spenser will argue against mastery in love. For although there is a hierarchy

24. The major argument of this thesis relies on the fact that Spenser associates man with the spirit, and spiritual transcendence, while associating woman with matter, and material lineage (i.e., an eternity through change). Masculinity excels in spiritual love and therefore friendship proves a particularly masculine kind of love. Femininity excels in material love, and therefore women are concerned with the second degree of love more than with the first. See, especially, (4.9.1-2.).

implicit in matter and spirit, woman and man, yet the claims of both polarities must be heeded equally in this life. Christ involved himself in matter, and suffered the pains of death for the purgation of sin in mankind. By his example we learn of the valid claims of the flesh, of matter. If Christ did not eschew matter, neither should we.

Jean's sentiments are perfectly clear on the fact that in serving nature, man serves God:-

Pensez de Nature enourer,
 Servez la par bien labourer.
 E se de l'autrui riens avez,
 Rendez le, se vous le savez,
 E se vous rendre ne poez
 Les biens despenduz ou joez,
 Aiez en bone volente
 Quant des biens avreiz a plenta.
 D'ocision nus ne s'aprouche,
 Netes aiez e mains e bouche;
 Seiez leial, seiez piteus,
 Lors ireiz ou champ deliteus,
 Par trace l'aiglelet sivant,
 En pardurablete vivant,
 Beivre de la bele fontaine,
 Qui tant est douce e clere e saine
 Que jamais mort ne recevreiz
 Si tost conde l'eve bevreiz,
 Ainz ireiz par joliete
 Chantant en pardurablete
 Motez, conduiz e chançonetes
 Par l'erbe vert seur les flouretes,
 Souz l'olivete querolant.

(R.R. 11. 20637-20659,
 pp. 51-2.)

Through practical observation - for he is clearly a man of the world - Jean has come to believe that mastery in love is a grievous error, and may be accountable for the many failures observed in marriage. Jean's sentiments are picked up by Chaucer, who also debates the "mastery in love" theme, as we shall soon see. Indeed, one is often struck with the number of times Chaucer owes a debt to Jean de Meun, while

reading through the Roman de la Rose. For instance, we might almost be reading the "Franklin's Tale" when we come to these lines:-

Que qu'ele die, oïl, senz faille,
 Ja de sa fame n'iert amez
 Qui sires veaut estre clamez;
 Car il couvient amour mourir
 Quant amant veulent seignourir.
 Amour ne peut durer ne vivre
 S'el n'est en cuer franc e delivre.

(R.R. 11 9436-9442,
 vol. 3, pp. 121-122.)

The Roman de la Rose is as important a source to Spenser as it proved to be for Chaucer. Jean's lesson is simply that this life is best lived by heeding equally the claims of the body and the spirit. He argues for a synthesis of the qualities expressed in the two gardens. And, coming down to practical matters, he advocates the eschewing of mastery in love. On these points, Spenser is in complete agreement.

Perhaps, at first glance, we would not expect to find a contrast between earthly and spiritual gardens in the Divine Comedy. Nevertheless, there is a contrast between the "wood" from the first canto of Hell, and the spiritual "Garden of Eden" in Purgatory, canto 28.²⁵ The intervening cantos

25. Strictly speaking, Dante does not contrast gardens, but rather forests. Dorothy Sayers comments that Dante's "insistence on speaking always of 'the sacred Forest', 'the ancient Forest', . . . (while) never employing the more usual and traditional image of a garden . . ." indicates that the poet ". . . is deliberately making a parallel and contrast with the 'dark Wood', the 'rough and stubborn Forest', from which he sets out upon his journey (Inf. i. I seq.)." See Dante, The Divine Comedy: Purgatory, trans. Dorothy L. Sayers (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1955), p. 293. I have used the 1967 reprint.

describe the soul's efforts to shed the sins of the flesh and to arrive at the state of purity and innocence possessed by Adam and Eve before the Fall.²⁶ Thus, from the threatening garden of this world, where Dante has lost his way, he eventually reclaims Eden and prepares to meet Beatrice and ascend into Heaven. The Eden he describes is probably one of the most inspired of all paradisaical visions. It has most of the traditional elements: the trees, fountains, streams, quires of birds, and temperate air. To a reader who has followed Dante and Virgil throughout the seven circles of Hell, and the "mount of Purgatory," these descriptions are a reward after many rigours.²⁷ There is more than enough material here to furnish Spenser with ideas for his own gardens, as we may readily appreciate. Now and then we are reminded of such gardens in Spenser as those of Acidale, and the Garden of Adonis (6.10. 5-32; 3.6.29-54.). It is likely that Dante's Eden was never far from Spenser's thoughts when he constructed his own:-

Vago gia di cercar dentro e dintorno
La divina foresta spessa e viva,
ch'a li occhi temperava il novo giorno,
sanza piu aspettar, lasciai la riva,
prendendo la compagna lento lento

26. Dorothy Sayers, p. 293.

27. The reader should, ideally, accompany Dante on his journey with the view of purging his baser passions and regaining a purity of soul.

su per lo suol che d'ogne parte auliva.

Un'aura dolce, senza mutamento
avere in se, mi feria per la fronte
mon di piu colpo che soave vento;

per cui le fronde, tremolando, pronte
tutte quante piegavano a la parte
u' la prim' ombra gitta il santo monte;

non pero dal loro esser dritto sparte
tanto, che li augelletti per le cime
lasciasser d'operare ogne lor arte;

ma con piena letizia l'ore prime,
Cantando, ricevieno intra le foglie,
che tenevan bordone a le sue rime,

tal qual di romo in ramo si raccoglie
per la pineta in su'l lito di Chiassi,
quand' Eolo scilocco fuor discioglie.

Gia m'avean trasportato i lenti passi
dentro a la selva antica tanto, ch'io
non potea rivedere ond' io mi 'ntrassi;

ed ecco piu andar mi tolse un rio,
che 'nver' sinistra con sue picciole onde
piegava l'erba che 'n sua ripa uscio.

Tutte l'acque che son di qua piu monde,
parrieno avere in se mistura alcuna
verso di quella, che nulla nasconde,

avvegna che si mova bruna bruna
sotto l'ombra perpetua, che mai
raggiar non lascia sole ivi ne luna.²⁸

Surely Spenser thought on this paradise when he wrote these
lines:-

. . . all that euer was by natures skill
Deuized to worke delight, was gathered there,
And there by her were poured forth at fill,
As if this to adorne, she all the rest did pill.

It was an hill plaste in an open plaine,
That round about was brodered with a wood
Of matchlesse hight, that seem'd th'earth to disdaine,
In which all trees of honour stately stood,
And did all winter as in sommer bud,
Spredding pauillions for the birds to bowre,
Which in their lower braunches sung aloud;
And in their tops the soring hauke did towre,
Sitting like King of fowles in maiesty and powre.

28. Dante, Le Opere di Dante Aligheri: Edizione Nazionale a Cura della Societa Dantesca Italiana, ed. Arnoldo Mondadori (Verona, 1967), vol. 3, Purgatory xxviii, ll. 1-33, pp. 477-480.

And at the foote thereof, a gentle flud
 His siluer waues did softly tumble downe,
 Vnmard with ragged mosse or filthy mud,
 Ne mote wylde beastes, ne mote the ruder clowne
 Thereto approach, ne filth mote therein drowne . . .

(6.10.5-7.)

And we are reminded of the Garden of Adonis as Dante continues to describe his Eden:-

Non parrebbe di la poi maraviglia,
 udito questo, quando alcuna pianta
 senza seme palese vi s'appiglia.
 E saper dei che la campagna santa
 dove tu se', d'ogne semenza e piena,
 e frutto ha in se che di la non si schianta.

. . .

Qui fu innocente l'umana radice;
 qui primavera sempre e ogne frutto . . .

(Purg. 28, ll. 115-120;
 142-143, pp. 489, 493.)

It is important to note that Eden was originally placed in this world: the world of matter. The beauty which Dante perceives in Eden is therefore as much material as spiritual. Dante was constantly aware of the mixture of matter and spirit, as every Christian must be. Hopper says, in

Medieval Number Symbolism:-

The duality of the Second Person is the image whose conformity to the circle was the ultimate mystery Dante sought to comprehend. But, however difficult of comprehension, there was no doubt that the image (dual, imperfect) did conform to the circle (perfect spirituality); no doubt that corruptible mortality did mingle (in the God-man) with the incorruptibility of the Trinity . . .

It is, therefore, a first principle with Dante that all perfection rests upon the harmonic operation of matter and form. These two antithetical principles were conceived to be active throughout the entire cosmos. ²⁹

29. Vincent Foster Hopper, Medieval Number Symbolism, pp. 165-166.

The poet does not, therefore, spurn matter and the material world; instead, he seeks to understand the harmony of the opposites of matter and spirit. Hopper suggests a list of opposites, which conform to this basic duality:

| | |
|---------------|---------|
| HEAVEN | EARTH |
| Invisible | Visible |
| Angels | Men |
| Prelate | Subject |
| Contemplative | Active |
| Rachel | Leah |
| Mary | Martha |
| Spirit | Flesh |
| Adam | Eve 30 |

It is written that at the end of the world God will reunite matter, and all the world, within Himself. Thus, He will reform the dualities of the universe into a supreme unity. And so, when Dante describes Paradise he indicates that at some time in the "life" of the soul, its sancitified body will be returned to be worn by that soul, to its greater perfection:-

Come la carne gloriosa e santa
fia rivestita, la nostra persona
piu grata fia per esser tutta quanta . . .

(Paradiso 14. 11. 43-5.)

The one great assertion behind Christianity is that the opposites of the universe are apparent, not actual: that they were created by the love of God, and that they will be resolved in harmony by that divine love. But, just as certainly, every Christian should know that if the vast polarities of the universe will reform into a divine unity in heaven, through the grace and power of God, then these

polarities are at least potentially reconcilable in this world. Indeed, it is this fact which inspires Spenser's vision of love. For, when love (between man and woman) is successful it imitates the greater union of spirit and matter which will exist in heaven. Lovers on earth imitate the unity, the Oneness, of the divine pattern by harmonizing opposites. The more complete the harmony, that is to say, the more equitable it is, the closer one is to a re-established Eden; to Adam and Eve reformed as before the Fall. Earthly lovers are an image of heavenly love. The list of opposites cited above suggests, in some measure, the scope of Spenser's vision: the union of lovers anticipates the harmony of every other polarity.

The mystery of the comingling of opposites was well recalled by Spenser who often demonstrated, by reference to the dualities of masculine and feminine, how each blends with each other, and how the polarities merge, through various exchanges, when man and woman become "one flesh." The union of man and woman suggested, to Spenser, the reformation of dissevered human nature. Marriage provided an imitation of the complete union expected in heaven. Each half of the dualism provided some quality lacking in the other. Man and woman exchange strengths and weaknesses with one another, and this makes the wedded couple stronger, as a couple, than each individual might be outside of marriage. Clearly, the ideal is to harmonize opposites, and marriage is simply one means of doing this. There is another road, of course. If one remains celibate, one must attempt to effect such a harmony of opposites in a more artificial manner.

Women must turn contemplative (like Beatrice on earth) in order to complement their material natures. Men must become active, to complement their more spiritual natures.

Jean de Meun had demonstrated, in his worldly manner, the validity of the claims of this world: in serving Dame Nature we also serve God. Dante was more of a philosopher, but his consistent approval of the union between spirit and flesh indicates a willingness to agree that the demands of nature are not simply necessary to the world but beneficial to the spirit as well.

The two sources (Roman de la Rose, and Divine Comedy) which we have examined were probably of some influence on Spenser: certainly they are major contributions to the development of poetry throughout the Middle Ages. But it is to Chaucer that Spenser owes his greatest debt. Of course, Chaucer was well aware of both the Roman de la Rose and the Divine Comedy. There are, for example, many "Rose" gardens in the Works of Chaucer; and there is Chaucer's own translation of Guillaume de Lorris' first part of the Roman de la Rose. And, we recall the Tuscan poet in these lines from the House of Fame:-

Me thoughte I sawgh an egle sore,
But that hit semed moche more
Then I had any egle seyn.
But this as sooth as deth, certeyn,
Hyt was of gold, and shon so bryghte
That never sawe men such a syghte . . .

(H.F. ll. 499-504.)³¹

31. Geoffrey Chaucer, The Works of Chaucer, ed. F. N. Robinson, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: The Riverside Press, 1957), p. 286. I have used the 1961 reprint. All subsequent references to Chaucer will cite this edition.

And Dante:-

. . . in sogno mi pareva veder sospesa
un' aguglia nel ciel con penne d'oro,
con l'ali aperte e a calare intesa . . .

(Purg. 9, ll. 19-21,
pp. 139-140.)

But, by far the most important poem, in terms of this study, is Chaucer's Parliament of Fowls. For this poem describes a Dantesque "otherworld" journey, and a garden which is closely reminiscent of Guillaume's Garden of Mirth. Chaucer chronicles an exploration not of the spiritual Eden, but of the love of this world: of Venus and Nature. His garden is a vision of this world, and his fountain is of the same type that entrapped Narcissus:-

For overal where that I myne eyen caste
were trees clad with leves that ay shal laste,

(like the pines of Sir Mirth's Garden)

Ech in his kynde, of colour fresh and greene
As emeraude, that joye was to seene.

(Parliament, ll. 172-175.)

Chaucer describes a list of trees, and continues:-

A gardyn saw I ful of blosmy bowes
Upon a ryver, in a grene mede,
There as swetnesse everemore inow is,
With floures white, blewe, yelwe, and rede,
And colde welle-stremes, nothyng dede,
That swymmen ful of smale fishes lighte,
With fynnes rede and skales sylver bryghte.
On every bow the bryddes herde I synge,
With voys of aungel in here armonye;
Some besyde him here bryddes forth to brynge;

. . .

Under a tre, besyde a welle, I say
Cupide, oure lord, his arwes forge and file;
And at his fet his bowe al redy lay;
And Wille, his doughter, temprede al this while
The hevedes in the welle, and with hire file
She touchede him, after they shulde serve
Some for to sle, and some to wounde and kerve.

(Parliament, ll. 183-92; 211-17.)

The poet had entered this earthly garden of love by the "double gates" which recall Dante's gates in Hell.³² In Chaucer's poem the gates specifically relate to human love, and therefore represent the endless duplicities and contradictions of such love. In creating the gates one might argue that Chaucer has distilled Jean de Meun's introductory remarks on love, and replaced them with one powerful image:-

This forseide Affrican me hente anon,
And forth with hym unto a gate broughte,
Ryght of a park walled with grene ston,
And over the gate, with lettres large iwroughte,
There were vers iwriten, as me thoughte,
On eyther half, of ful gret difference,
Of which I shal now seyn the playn sentence:

'Thorgh me men gon into that blysfyl place
Of hertes hele and dedly woundes cure;
Thorgh me men gon unto the wellle of grace,
There grene and lusty May shal evere endure.
This is the way to al good aventure.
Be glad, thow redere, and thy sorwe of-caste;
Al open am I - passe in, and sped thee faste!'

'Thorgh me men gon,' than spak that other side,
'Unto the mortal strokes of the spere
Of which Disdayn and Daunger is the gyde,
There nevere tre shal fruyt ne leves bere.
This strem you ledeth to the sorweful were
There as the fish in prysoun is al drye;
Th'eschewing is only the remedye!'

These vers of gold and blak iwriten were,
Of whiche I gan astoned to beholde,
For with that oon encresede ay me fere,
And with that other gan myn herte bolde;
That oon me hette, that other dide me colde:
No wit hadde I, for errour, for to chese,
To entre or flen, or me to save or lese.

(Parliament, ll. 120-147.)

Spenser was to remember the double gates of gold and iron in

32. Dante, Le Opere di Dante Alighieri: Inferno (La Commedia), ed. Arnoldo Mondadori, Canto III, ll. 1 ff., pp. 39-41.

his Garden of Adonis.

We have seen, briefly, part of the tradition which Spenser drew on to construct his own gardens of paradise. In the Roman de la Rose, and the Divine Comedy we have noted similarities in two very different approaches to the contrast between earthly and spiritual love. Jean, ever the skeptic, the man of the world, would simply nudge us into believing in Nature's laws, as well as the devotion to spiritual things. At times he is amazingly philosophic, but in the main he simply cajoles.

Dante, on the other hand, is fascinated with the philosophical aspects that hold Jean but a moment, and in passing. Yet both poets seem to agree to the validity of both worlds: of spirit and flesh. Chaucer, as I intend to argue presently, carries on this tradition by arguing that the material world has claims equal to the spiritual, even granting the hierarchy of the universe. It is primarily through the love debate in Chaucer that this tradition is noticeable; and Spenser continues Chaucer's debate, agreeing that the two worlds of flesh and spirit can merge in this world, as in the next, along equitable lines.

In advancing his theory of love, Spenser is clearly drawing on a significant tradition. Had he adopted the theory without the carefully evolved images and hieroglyphics, (the very language of love) he could not have had such success. Surely, it is because he placed his traditional argument within a traditional frame, (by using both mythology and images like the "gardens of love") that he succeeded so well.

We can quite literally deduce the direction of Spenser's thought in books three and four from a summary of the major themes from Chaucer's love debate. Chaucer agrees with Jean de Meun that Dame Nature's laws must be heeded, and that, at the same time, man must pin his ultimate hopes on the faith in a life which transcends the mutable world of our experience. It is his insistence on the necessity of man to live in two worlds which Spenser develops to the point of a philosophy by "magnifying louers deare debate (4. Proem.1.)."

For Chaucer demonstrates that there are two kinds of gardens and two kinds of love; and that man and woman each excell in one or the other kind. When lovers are married to one another they unite both of these loves within one flesh. The spiritual love is always of a higher nature, but while we are on earth there is no necessity to turn our backs on human love. In essence, Chaucer's solution to the love problems raised in the "debate" is recorded in the "Franklin's Tale;" here he finds that there should not be mastery in love, and that man and woman should unite equally with one another. This does not deny that there is a hierarchy which places man higher than woman (spirit higher than body), but instead, the solution indicates that the hierarchy can be maintained without either partner becoming destructively masterful in love. Spenser will fully agree with Chaucer's solution: in fact, the third and fourth books of the Faerie Queene demonstrate the necessity of maintaining the hierarchy

without mastery.

Chaucer's love debate consists of far more than the "marriage-group" of tales from the Canterbury Tales. We may justly add the Parliament of Fowls and the "Knight's Tale." I shall discuss these in connection with the most significant of the "marriage-group" tales (from my point of view), i.e., "The Wife of Bath's prologue," and the "Franklin's Tale."³³

The Parliament of Fowls is a dream poem on the subject of love. In his dream, the poet is reticent to enter into the earthly garden of love, for he is unable to risk entering the double gate which both invites and warns. Once entered, the poet finds the May Rose garden, already described. The entire vision is one which appealed to Spenser when he wrote of the masque of Cupid (3.12.1-27.) and the Temple of Venus, (4.10.29-58.) for Chaucer's personifications of love lead him directly to Venus' temple where "Dame Pees" guards the door.³⁴

In this poem, the poet is led through the double gates, into the May garden, up to Cupid's well, past the allegorical personifications of Cupid's love, and finally, into the dark, stuffy, and almost wholly artificial temple. The next stage of the journey reveals the force of Nature. From the dark interior of the temple, the poet emerges into the light:-

When I was come ayeyn into the place
That I of spak, that was so sote and grene,

33. I shall reserve a discussion of the Knight's Tale until later. It is appropriately discussed in relation to the battle in the lists in the third canto of book four of the Faerie Queene.

34. The Temple of Venus is guarded by Concord (4.10.29-36.). Spenser mentions the Parliament of Fowls (7.7.9.).

Forth welk I tho myselven to solace.
 Tho was I war wher that ther sat a queene
 That, as of lyght the somer sonne shene
 Passeth the storre, right so over mesure
 She fayrer was than any creature.

And in a launde, upon an hil of floures,
 was set this noble goddessse Nature.
 Of braunches were here halles and here boures
 Iwrought after here cast and here measure;
 Ne there nas foul that cometh of engendrure
 That they ne were prest in here presence,
 To take hire dom and yeve hire audyence.

(Parliament. ll. 295-308.)

This is the opposite of what occurs in the House of Fame, when
 the poet leaves the glass temple and issues forth into:-

. . . a large feld,
 As fer as that I myghte see,
 Withouten toun, or hous, or tree,
 Or bush, or grass, or eryd lond;
 For al the feld nas but of sond
 As smal as man may se yet lye
 In the desert of Lybye;
 Ne no maner creature
 That ys yformed be Nature
 Ne sawgh I, me to rede or wisse.

(H.F. ll. 482-491.)

In the Parliament the poet comes to a garden which is wholly
 fruitful; in the House of Fame, he finds a sterile desert.
 In Chaucer we also find a contrast which Spenser was to use
 to good advantage in the Faerie Queene, where he frequently
 contrasted art with nature. For example, in the House of
Fame (ll. 1201-1213; 1356-1367) we find this contrast. And
 of course, Chaucer is making a distinction of this sort in
 the distinction between the stifling temple of Venus and the
 light hill of Nature.

The next episode of the Parliament recounts the parley,
 and the poem concludes with a song in celebration of Nature
 whose regenerative powers can drive away the black night

of winter.

In some ways a simple description of the poem is most revealing, for we can see that if earthly love leads ultimately to the transcendent vision of Dame Nature, and to the continuing generation of species, then the poet's reticence to enter the double gates is truly ill founded, as Africanus suggests. What is clearly meant in the journey is the lesson that the contrarities of love are worth braving so long as Nature's laws are served in the end. Even the darkness of Venus' temple gives way to the light of Nature.

The Parliament is a poem concerning earthly rather than spiritual love, and it is a great affirmation of the value of the material world and the demands of the flesh. The gates prophesy the "heaven" and "hell" of earthly love; the garden with its trees, birds, streams and fountain belongs to this world; the temple represents the artifice, and fleshly singlemindedness, of love (it is dark because such obsessions can dim the light of Nature as well as of the spirit); but finally, the verdant hill of Dame Nature represents the "heaven" into which the lover is reborn through his involvement in the great creative processes of Nature. From the point at which the lover enters the double gates, until his emergence into Nature's realm, we recognize a Dantesque journey: Chaucer's dream vision leads to the darkness of the lover's "hell" and thence into the light of the lover's "heaven". By involvement in Nature, in matter, he can purchase an eternal life through lineage. The heaven of the spirit bestows eternity to the individual; the heaven of the flesh bestows eternity to the race. Thus, the two are nicely, and most important, evenly

balanced against one another despite the hierarchy which elevates spirit above flesh. This is what is behind Chaucer's assertion (following Jean de Meun) that Nature is "the vicar of the almyghty Lord (Parliament, l. 379)." By serving Nature man serves God.

This point is stressed in the "Knight's Tale" which asserts that the hierarchy of the universe fulfils God's plan, and that man cannot possibly alter things as they are. Therefore, it is best to make virtue of necessity and to serve nature and this world gladly. In so doing one accepts mortality, and the world of the flesh, not as a disagreeable trial, but with absolute joy. Because, in living life to the full, Nature's (and God's) laws are served. But Chaucer has also made a distinction between the spiritual and fleshly worlds. He asserts the ultimate supremacy of the spirit, but yet argues that a wholehearted involvement in the flesh is still a virtue. We shall discuss this tale at a later time.

The lessons of the Parliament and the "Knight's Tale" strike a "key" note in the love debate in Chaucer, and later, Spenser. Neither poet will attempt to deny, or even modify, the sense of a hierarchy in this world. Man is "higher" than woman just as Christ is "higher" than man, or as the head is superior to the body. But, neither Chaucer nor Spenser accept that the hierarchy implies the necessity of turning away from this world. But both go further: neither is the hierarchy proof that man should have mastery in love. Eventually, in the fullness of time, the hierarchy will be served. Spirit will transcend the flesh, for this is inevitable. In the meantime it is well to accept the material

world - in fact, to make "virtue of necessity."

This is almost the point of departure for the Wife of Bath's argument. She never refutes the hierarchy - indeed she is capable of arguing man's superiority to woman when and if it serves her advantage to do so (C.T.III (D) l. 441-2.). Instead, she takes for granted the division between matter and spirit, and decides to live her material life to the full. If man is inherently superior to woman, this fact never seems to bother the Wife in her continual quest for mastery.

The first word of the wife's prologue is "experience". This, it seems to me, is symbolic of everything which follows in the prologue and tale. Experience is what we gain, by way of knowledge, from this world; "Auctoritee" is what we gain, by way of knowledge, from books. And the Wife openly claims experience of this world as enough for her. From the very first word she utters she reveals her total involvement in this material world. And in this world, experience does not necessarily support the hierarchical claims of the spirit.

The Wife's prologue begins the discussion, of "mastery" in love, which continues until the Franklin's Tale. There is no doubt that she argues for mastery, but on the other hand, her actions are sometimes different from her beliefs. Judging from what she says of her fifth husband, we might well argue that the Wife does not actually believe in mastery at all: she only desires her husband to offer her the mastery so that she can accept, and refuse it. Of course, the tale she tells illustrates this very situation. The knight offers mastery to the loathly lady, and she, having obtained

in this way, renounces it to the knight's benefit.

The Wife is a complex character. She claims mastery and seems ready to renounce it; she will dominate her husbands if she can, and never bother to refute the fact that woman is traditionally inferior to man (although the Clerk's book makes her infernally angry).. Perhaps the best course of action is simply to say that the Wife begins the debate on mastery in love; and she does not see any conflict between "mastery" and the supposed spiritual and intellectual superiority of man.

The "Franklin's Tale" is valuable because it provides a solution to the marriage debate by placing this problem within the context of the two conflicting worlds: earthly and spiritual. Masculine nature is associated with the spirit, and with the "other" world; the feminine nature is associated more with matter and with "this" world. And yet, though we shall see that this is emphasized in the tale, we find that mastery is rejected not simply for woman, but for man as well. In spite of the hierarchy, Chaucer would renounce all mastery in love. This is made quite obvious at the beginning of the tale. Dorigen took Arveragus:-

. . . for hir bousbonde and hir lord,
Of swich lordshipe as men han over hir wyves.
And for to lede the moore in blisse hir lyves,
Of his free wyl he swoor hire as a knyght
That nevere in al his lyf he, day ne nyght,
Ne sholde upon hum take no maistrie
Agayn hir wyl, ne kithe hire jalousie,
But hire obeye, and folwe hir wyl in al,
As any love to his lady shal,
Save that the name of soveraynetee,
That wolde he have for shame of his degree.

She thanked hym, and with ful greet humblesse
She seyde, 'Sire, sith of youre gentillesse
Ye profre me to have so large a reyne,
Ne wolde nevere God betwixe us tweyne,

As in my gilt, were outhere werre or stryf.
 Sire, I wol be youre humble trewe wyf;
 Have heer my trouthe, til that myn herte
 breste.'

(F.T. ll. 742-759.)

Here the husband swears to renounce all mastery in love, keeping only the outward show of "soveraynetee" appropriate to his degree. Since the promise is honest, the wife also rejects the mastery. And thus, both partners agree to serve one another equitably in love:-

Heere may men seen an humble, wys accord;
 Thus hath she take hir servant and hir lord -
 Servant in love, and lord in mariage.
 Thanne was he bothe in lordshipe and servage.
 Servage? nay, but in lordshipe above,
 Sith he hath bothe his lady and his love;
 His lady, certes, and his wyf also,
 The which that lawe of love acordeth to.³⁵

(F.T. ll. 791-798.)

In love, this husband and wife are servants unto one another; in life the husband is the recognized sovereign. Thus the marriage is based on equity, while the hierarchy, which indicates male supremacy, is sustained:-

For o thyng, sires, saufly dar I seye,
 That freendes everych oother moot obeye,
 If they wol longe holden compaignye.
 Love wol nat been constreyned by maistrye.
 Whan maistrie comth, the God of Love anon
 Beteth his wynges, and farewell, he is gon!
 Love is a thyng as any spirit free.
 Wommen, of kynde, desiren libertee,
 And nat to been constreyned as a thral;
 And so doon men, if I sooth seyen shal.

(F.T., ll. 761-770.)

35. This is, of course, a renunciation of courtly love.

Mastery in love leads to jealousy and lust, as in the story of January and May. But in the "Franklin's Tale" both married partners spurn mastery and avoid, thereby, these particular dangers. The story involves the departure of Arveragus for Britain:-

To seke in armes worshipe and honour;
For al his lust he sette in swich labour . . .

(F.T., ll. 811-12.)

While this noble knight is away from home, Dorigen is asked to keep faith in his return and to live quietly, and honorably, as befits her station in life. But each day, as she looks over the sea, she becomes more and more possessed with fear for her husband's safety. The black rocks which threaten death to all mariners become conscious symbols of evil to her. It is this particular weakness which betrays her into an innocent promise. Though she feels no inclination to lust (for Arveragus' gentillesse has prevented it) yet she would submit to the suitor's desires on the seemingly impossible condition that he remove all of the rocks along the entire coast. The squire manages to deceive Dorigen with the help of a magician, and she is forced to agree to the suitor's demands, or else break her word.

It is to this situation that Arveragus returns. But since he will not become masterful in love, he avoids the destructive force of jealousy. And thus he is able to council Dorigen to keep her word, though it would sorely grieve them both. Dorigen relates her husband's decision to the squire who is so taken by such "gentillesse" that he, in turn,

releases the wife. In so doing, he would lose a great sum of money to the magician, for no purpose. But, once the magician is apprised of the situation, he also acts accordingly by releasing the squire from their agreement.

But aside from the simplest level of allegory which involves the eschewing of mastery (and of lust and jealousy, by implication), there is an important suggestion in this tale, of the relationships between the two worlds of spirit and flesh, and the consequent association of Arveragus and Dorigen with one or the other of these worlds. By means of this allegory Chaucer clearly indicates the hierarchy which associates the masculine nature with the spiritual world, and the feminine nature with the material one, as he would have found indicated in St. Paul's Epistles.³⁶

Arveragus is a knight of high degree who quests after honor, above all else. It is his "gentillesse" which not only provides for the equitable relationships between himself and his wife, but which actually descends the hierarchy of this world (wife, squire, clerk) to infuse all with admiration and a desire to imitate such an example of love. He is the first mover, in a sense. Perhaps it is not amiss to argue that this "bridegroom" is, himself, imitating Christ whose supreme love and gentillesse all should emulate. When Arveragus crosses the sea to dwell in another world, Dorigen must keep faith in his return.

But as she scans the death-threatening sea she begins

36. 1 Corinthians 11: 2-15; Ephesians 5: 22-33.

to lose that faith, for all about her she sees the grim reminders of death, destruction, and chaos. She begins to heed the appearances of this world, and to take them for reality:-

But whan she saugh the grisly rokkes blake,
 For verray feere so wolde hir herte quake
 That on hire feet she myghte hire noght sustene,
 Thanne wolde she sitte adoun upon the grene,
 And pitously into the see biholde,
 And seyn right thus, with sorweful sikkes colde:
 "Eterne God, that thurgh thy purveiance
 Ledest the world by certein governaunce,
 In ydel, as men seyn, ye no thyng make.
 But, Lord, thise grisly feendly rokkes blake,
 That semen rather a foul confusion
 Of werk than any fair creacion
 Of swich a parfit wys God and a stable,
 Why han ye wrought this werk unresonable?
 For by this werk, south, north, ne west, ne eest,
 Ther nys yfostred man, ne bryd, ne beest;
 It dooth no good, to my wit, but anoyeth.
 Se ye nat, Lord, how mankynde it destroyeth?
 An hundred thousand bodyes of mankynde
 Han rokkes slayn, al be they nat in mynde,
 Which mankynde is so fair part of thy werk
 That thou it madest lyk to thyn owene merk.
 Thanne semed it ye hadde a greet chiertee
 Toward mankynde; but how thanne may it bee
 That ye swiche meenes make it to destroyen,
 Whiche meenes do no good, but evere anoyen?
 I woot wel clerkes wol seyn as hem leste,
 By argumentz, that al is for the beste,
 Though I ne kan the causes nat yknowe.
 But thilke God that made wynd to blowe
 As kepe my lord! this my conclusion.
 To clerkes lete I all disputison.
 But wolde God that alle thise rokkes balke
 Were sonken into helle for his sake!
 Thise rokkes sleen myn herte for the feere."³⁷

(F.T. ll. 859-893.)

At the same time as she begins to find her faith threatened by what she understands from experience, other

37. This passage draws on the Consolation of Philosophy by Boethius. See, especially, II, prosa and metrum 4, in The Works of Chaucer, pp. 332-334.

kinds of worldly appeals begin to intrude. In yet another of those May gardens, the squire begins to court the faithful wife. The garden is a contrived mixture of nature and art, with art given the emphasis. Thus, as it will be in Spenser, such gardens may represent the kinds of dangerous temptations of this world which derive from an improper relationship between art and nature. In this case, because Dorigen is happily married, the garden symbolizes the fact that the squire's courtship is founded more on art than nature, and its artificiality makes it wrong in this case.³⁸ The worldly garden is a suitable place for the squire to meet Dorigen:-

. . . May hadde peynted with his softe shoures
 This gardyn ful of leves and of floures;
 And craft of mannes hand so curiously
 Arrayed hadde this gardyn, trewely,
 That nevere was ther gardyn of swich prys,
 But if it were the verray paradys.

(F.T. 11.907-912.)

Clearly, every kind of worldly temptation and appearance is assaulting Dorigen and working toward the dissolution of her "faith" in her husband's return from across the sea. The appearances of this world are in direct conflict with the stable reality which Dorigen must accept through faith alone.

Because Dorigen is a woman she is more sensitive to these appearances. She does not succumb to lust, because even though the temptations exist, her marriage is too stable for

38. Chaucer is rejecting the artifice, and artificiality, of courtly love. Spenser continues the argument by associating this kind of love with the artificiality of Castle Joyous and the masque of Cupid.

her even to recognize them.³⁹ But she does weaken in faith. To succumb to lust would probably destroy the marriage. But she feels the rocks threatening the same thing, and so, perhaps this is the reason she agrees conditionally to the squire's proposition. In the first place she cannot believe he is capable of removing the rocks; secondly, she equates her lover's death on the rocks with her own submission to the squire. The promise is never meant, but only offered as an indication of this equation. It is wholly fitting that Dorigen - whose faith has been eroded by the appearances of this world - should be compromised by mere appearances. The squire does not remove the rocks, as he had promised. He merely hides them by the magical arts of the clerk. Dorigen's fear of the rocks is ill-founded because they do not threaten Arveragus in Britain, but only threaten in Dorigen's world. She believes the rocks to be more powerful than they are - as indeed, Arveragus' return proves. Death in this world is no threat in the other world.

There is, certainly a conscious dichotomy of worlds in this story, and Arveragus clearly imitates Christ through his gentillesse, and perhaps, through his mission to the world beyond Dorigen's ken. Chaucer makes the point that man and woman are arranged in a hierarchy, and that man is superior to woman because man is more spiritual. Arveragus travels to

39. The marriage of Dorigen and Arveragus is not threatened by the arts of courtly, adulterous love. Compare Britomart's reaction to Malecasta (3.1.50-51.). She, too, does recognize the overtures to lust.

the other world out of honorable motives; Dorigen must remain in her own world where she is daily assaulted by material temptations which seek to ruin her marriage and erode her faith. Arveragus, as I have said, imitates Christ. If Chaucer heeded Paul he would have had all the authority he needed for describing the husband in these terms:-

Wives, be subject to your husbands as to the Lord; for the man is the head of the woman, just as Christ also is the head of the church. Christ is, indeed, the Saviour of the body; but just as the church is subject to Christ, so must women be to their husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the church. . . . In the same way men also are bound to love their wives, as they love their own bodies. In loving his wife a man loves himself. For no one ever hated his own body: on the contrary, he provides and cares for it; and that is how Christ treats the church, because it is his body, of which we are living parts. Thus it is that (in the words of Scripture) 'a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'. It is a great truth that is hidden here.

(Ephesians 5)

Arveragus has renounced the mastery which would seem to be indicated in Paul's letters - certainly the Wife of Bath revolted against Paul's authority on this point - but he has kept the sovereignty which the world expects, and which he, indeed, cannot cast off. He is, indisputably, superior to his wife by his very inborn nature. Chaucer merely demonstrates that such superiority does not preclude a marriage based on equity. Thus, Arveragus can act in imitation of Christ, through the events of the story, and especially through his love which influences everyone.

Dorigen acts out her role just as well. She, as a woman,

is associated with the body, and with the material world. We have seen how this world tempts her and how she avoids lust, to her credit. But her material weakness tempts her to weaken her faith: faith being a more spiritual activity, the wife is inclined to heed more the appearances of this world and leave it to "clerks" as she plainly admits.

What Chaucer has seen is that mastery kills love. On the other hand, he had to square this knowledge with the authority of the Bible which, in either Testament, solidly argues the inferiority of woman, and the necessity of her obedience to her husband. He decides that the hierarchical distinctions need not be disturbed by a theory of equity in love: for if love is strengthened, thereby, then the hierarchy is also strengthened. As we have seen, Chaucer generally admits the claims of both flesh and spirit and attempts to bring them into a viable synthesis so that, whether we are talking about a human soul, or reformed human nature in marriage, we can see that God is well served. Chaucer's lesson is often that in serving nature one serves God. This applies equally well to the partners in marriage: in serving the woman man serves himself and God. What better way to reform human nature than according to the principles of equity which would preserve the marriage best?

That Spenser was aware of these lessons from Chaucer is apparent not only from the fact that he mentions Chaucer to pay him tribute, but that he paraphrases the most significant quotation from the "Franklin's Tale" on two different occasions, and in two different books - both of which are devoted to the subject of love:-

Ne may loue be compeld by maisterie;
 For soone as maisterie comes, sweet loue anone
 Taketh his nimble wings, and soone away is gone.

(3.1.25.)

So says Britomart, thus beginning the mastery in love theme in the third book. But also, Duessa rephrases this sentiment in order to make Scudamour jealous. That Duessa should repeat a truth does not make it any less true: the Devil can quote Scripture, after all:-

For Love is free, and led with selfe delight,
 Ne will enforced be with maisterdome or might.

(4.1.46.)

But Spenser does not merely continue the love debate; he actually magnifies it, as he says in the introduction to the fourth book. He accepts that the renunciation of mastery is not at all a contradiction to the hierarchy which he would have to accept from Scripture. The feminine nature is like the body; the masculine is like the mind, or spirit. In this light, he constructs book three as the book of the feminine nature, and book four as the book of the masculine nature. Because Eve was drawn from Adam, we will find that the book of the feminine nature blends into the book of the masculine nature both on a structural and thematic level.

Book three is organized around the image of the womb (the Garden of Adonis) as some numerological analyses have shown;⁴⁰ and at either end of the book we find the extreme

40. Alastair Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), pp. 132-144.

dangers which threaten the feminine, venerean nature. The excellence of the female is expressed through fleshly generation (the Garden), but lust in the body and mind (Castle Joyous and the House of Busyrane) are its principal dangers, as I shall argue.

If book three expresses fleshly matters, both excellent and vile, book four suggests the spiritual purpose appropriate to masculinity. Whereas Cupid represents the prime force besieging the feminine nature in book three, Ate is the principal danger to the more spiritual masculine nature. Cupid attacks the flesh; Ate attacks even the Almighty God.

Spenser expands Chaucer's distinction between the claims of this world and the next in order to associate the feminine nature with this world and the eternity founded on mutability; and the masculine nature with the world of the spirit, and with eternity beyond mutability. In the balance between these natures Spenser combines the two "worlds", and the two types of eternity. The equal balance in marriage is constructed with deference to the demands of this world, but if marriages are stabilized in this way, then the overall hierarchy cannot fail to benefit.

The third and fourth books are, therefore, the two vast polarities of woman and man. Their separation causes much of the trouble described in both books, but once they are brought into harmony the lover's debate ends. We shall find that each book emphasizes its own gender, but that since the masculine nature is meant to absorb the feminine, there are obvious thematic and structural invasions from book three into book

four: feminine into masculine. Indeed, both books are united on the same time scheme, for we shall see that Florimell's race from the land of book three to the sea of book four takes place over the period of one year. Her particular chase will provide much evidence for the actual "marriage" of books three and four. The Thames-Medway celebration is therefore a demonstration of the union of books which symbolize the opposite natures of male and female. The Thames-Medway marriage is a celebration of the sanctification of the union of the opposite books comprising "lovers deare debate." It is another Epithalamion.

INTRODUCTION: PART TWO

In the third book of the Faerie Queene there are three major episodes: Castle Joyous (canto one), the Garden of Adonis (canto six), and the House of Busyrane (cantos eleven and twelve).

The "extremes" of this triad of major episodes represent a dualism of body and mind, in partial and incomplete mediation by the Garden of Adonis which occupies the "mean" position. Malecasta's castle and Busyrane's house are placed at the farthest extremes from one another to indicate that the feminine body and mind are at war.

It is Britomart's quest to begin with the fleshly temptations of Castle Joyous and to conclude with the mental torments of the

House of Busyrane, in order that her own synthesis of Venus and Diana may effect a reconciliation of the polarities of body and mind. The venerean element is, however, not enough to reconcile the body and mind once Cupid has upset their goodly harmony.

Therefore, we shall notice that Britomart's strongest and surest defence, in both Castle Joyous and the House of Busyrane, is the defence of chastity, which is provided by the Diana element in her nature. The venerean element manifests itself principally in bodily pleasure leading to generation; the Diana element will be found to provide the strength of understanding, and purpose.

Essentially, therefore, Britomart already contains the unity of body and mind within herself simply because she possesses the harmony of Venus and Diana. Her "masculine" armor represents as much a defence of intellect as a defence of chastity - as, indeed, her trials in both Castle Joyous and the House of Busyrane indicate.

The three major episodes are all lacking in the Diana element

and this is why their final, and most virtuous, accord can only be effected by Britomart. The symmetrical pattern of these episodes suggests the operation of a harmonising triad, since two extremes seem to be balanced by the Garden's central, mediating term.¹ But the stability of this triad is a false one until Britomart has added the lacking defensive element of understanding and purpose.

Castle Joyous is infected by a venerean sterility arising from the excesses of non-productive lust; the Garden of Adonis represents the highest, and most virtuous, development of the venerean nature which lacks all contact with the Diana element; and the House of Busyrane represents the venerean mind, again, deprived of the Diana element. What we have, then, is a diagram of excess and defect balanced by a "golden" mean. The excessive venerean nature runs toward lustful sterility, as in Castle Joyous. The defective venerean nature is characterized by mindlessness (of Amoret) which is symbolized in the House of Busyrane. The pure ideal of the venerean nature is therefore a blend of lust (Castle Joyous) and mindlessness (House of Busyrane), which is productive of fruitful, fleshly generation, and an eternity founded on mutability.²

1. See esp. Alastair Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time, pp. 18-33. This book will hereafter be cited as "Numbers." Book three is constructed according to the principles of triadic harmony; book four reflects the more stable harmony of the tetrad.
2. As an ideal of material generation, the Garden is beyond any censure. But, it will become apparent why Britomart - who possesses the potential of material fruitfulness and the defence of chastity and intellect - is the only true "mean" capable of reconciling the feminine body and mind of book three. The Garden provides a "mean" in nature, but it does not distinguish between beasts and people. Since mankind transcends mere nature by virtue of a higher mind, the Garden cannot reconcile the dualities of the human body and mind.

One crucial revelation with regard to book 3 is that a warfare of body and mind has been caused by Cupid's activity, and that Spenser has previously described the harmony of body and mind with reference to the House of Alma from book 2, where we found Cupid to be disarmed and harmless. There, he was only love's potential. In the third book, the wide separation of body and mind is caused by the fact that he has altered from potential to act.

Therefore, it becomes necessary to devote a full examination to the tripartite House of Alma before taking up the tripartite third book of the Faerie Queene. By discussing Alma and her house we discover the essential reason behind Spenser's placement of major episodes in book 3, (i.e., Castle Joyous, Garden of Adonis, House of Busyrane in cantos 1-6-11, 12). First of all we shall discuss the House of Alma, treating this discussion as an introduction to the third book in general; then we shall begin our study of the three major episodes of book 3, recalling, all the while, the importance and relevance of Alma and her house.

Introduction

"The House of Alma"

i

The House of Alma is not simply a traditional allegory of the human body as a "castle" or "house"; it is also almost as mechanistic a view of the body of man as Descartes' own views some forty years later. It is interesting to compare, in this light, Descartes' "homme-machine" with Spenser's House of Alma. Indeed, Descartes' treatise L'Homme, which was a part of Le Monde ou Traite de la Lumière (written 1633, published 1662) is an excellent introduction to the House of Alma:-

. . . I want you to consider next that all the functions which I have attributed to this machine, such as the digestion of food, the beating of the heart and arteries, the nourishment and growth of the members, respiration, waking, and sleeping; the impressions of light, sounds, odours, tastes, heat and other such qualities on the organs of the external senses; the impression of their ideas on the common sense and the imagination; the retention of imprinting of these ideas upon the memory; the interior motions of the appetites and passions; and, finally, the external movements of all members, which follow so suitably as well the actions of objects which present themselves to sense, as the passions and impressions which are formed in the memory, that they imitate in the most perfect manner possible those of a real man . . . ³

Descartes' "homme-machine" was, of course, only theoretical. And

3. A.C. Crombie, Augustine to Galileo: Science in the Later Middle Ages and Early Modern Times 13th-17th Century, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1959), vol. 2, p. 245. I have used the 1969 reprint in "Peregrine Books."

besides, the philosopher's intentions were to disprove the existence of souls other than a "rational" one. He had said that:-

I assume that the body is nothing more than a statue or machine of clay. ⁴

But where Descartes captures Spenser's "spirit" is in these words:-

Such persons will look upon this body as a machine made by the hands of God, which is incomparably better arranged, and adequate to movements more admirable than in any machine of human invention. ⁵

Spenser and Descartes have their differences, no doubt, but each celebrated the human body as a "wondrous machine". And thus, we discover that Spenser's admiration for the body's goodly order is advanced with mechanical and architectural imagery. The nose becomes a "portcullis":-

Which to the gate directly did incline,
With comely compasse, and compacture strong,
Neither vnseemely short, nor yet exceeding long.

(2.9.24)

The stomach is in a huge kitchen cooled by two great bellows, or lungs:-

It [the kitchen] was a vault ybuilt for great dispenche,
With many raunges reard along the wall;
And one great chimney, whose long tonnell thence
The smoke forth threw. And in the midst of all
There placed was a caudron wide and tall,
Vpon a mighty furnace, burning whot,
More whot, then Aetn', or flaming Mongiball:
For day and night it brent, ne ceased not,
So long as any thing it in the caudron got.

4. Crombie, vol. 2, p. 245.

5. Crombie, vol. 2, p. 245.

But to delay the heat, least by mischaunce
 It might breake out, and set the whole on fire,
 There added was by goodly ordinaunce,
 An huge great paire of bellowes, which did styre
 Continually, and cooling breath inspyre.

(2.9.29-30)

So impressed is our poet with the "goodly workemanship" (2.9.21) of the body that he does not hesitate to trace the operation of the digestion to its natural end:-

But all the liquour, which was fowle and wast,
 Not good nor seruiceable else for ought,
 They in another great round vessell plast,
 Till by a conduit pipe it thence were brought:
 And all the rest, that noyous was, and nought,
 By secret wayes, that none might it espy,
 Was close conuaid, and to the back-gate brought,
 That cleped was Port Esquiline, whereby
 It was auoided quite, and throwne out privily.

(2.9.32)

The castle is described as being under siege. Its five great bulwarks represent the five senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. Each sense is assaulted by fleshly temptations, under the order of Maleger. Spenser orders the senses according to tradition, and as the hierarchy of senses descends from sight to touch, the attackers become more and more hideous. The strongest attacks made on the first bulwark of sight are, for example, beauty and money. (2.11.9) But those which attack the fifth bulwark are:-

. . . most horrible of hew,
 And fierce of force . . .
 For some like Snailles, some did like spyders shew,
 And some like vgly Vrchins thicke and short:
 Cruelly they assayled that fift Fort,
 Armed with darts of sensuall delight,
 With stings of carnall lust, and strong effort
 Of feeling pleasures, with which day and night
 Against that some fift bulwarke they continued fight.

(2.11.13)

The attackers are found to be without substance. Arthur and Guyon

hew and slash at:-

. . . their idle shades;
For though they bodies seeme, yet substance from
them laces.

(2.9.15)

In the end, Arthur triumphs over Maleger by casting him into water. The ground, which is responsible for the nurture of fleshly lusts, gives succor to its off-spring so that each time Maleger falls to the earth, he rebounds with greater might and malice.

Like Descartes, Spenser admired the marvellous workings of the human body; but since the body is essentially no more than clay, it is continually subject to the attacks of certain "idle shades" which are born of the same clay as the body, but which lack all real substance. Thus, Spenser praises the goodly workmanship of the body:-

Which goodly order, and great workmans skill
Whenas those knights beheld, with rare delight,
And gazing wonder they their minds did fill;
For neuer had they seene so straunge a sight.

(2.9.33)

But he also acknowledges that this wondrous machine is imperiled by the same clay of which it is composed:-

But O great pittie, that no lenger time
So goodly workemanship should not endure:
Soone it must turne to earth; no earthly thing is sure.

(2.9.21)

Again, like Descartes, Spenser will rely on something more "sure" than the mere machine of the body.

Spenser, however, would disagree with Descartes' belief that there is no vegetable or animal soul within the body. His mechanism does not take him to the limits laid down by the later philosopher. He still believes in a tripartite soul. One could say, in fact, that he believes in it because of the goodly "machine-line" order of the body. The later mechanists argued, conversely, that the analogy of the body to a machine was proof of the nonexistence of vegetable and animal souls.

The three souls are reflected in the three distinct stages covered in the journey of Arthur and Guyon throughout the house. Essentially, the place of Appetite and Diet, including everything from the "stately hall" to the private "Port Esculline", represents the "vegetable soul." This part of the body carries out the most natural of functions appropriate to this, the lowest of souls.⁶

The animal soul is located in Alma's parlor: a place which is inhabited by the ladies who represent the interior senses of the body. The arras within the parlor is a significant feature:-

Thence backe againe faire Alma led them right,
And soone into a goodly Parlour brought,
That was with royall arras richly dight,
In which was nothing pourtrahed, nor wrought,
Not wrought, nor portrahed, but easie to be thought.

(2.9.33.)

6. See: Frederic Copleston, S.J., A History of Philosophy, 2nd ed., (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1962), vol. I, pt. 2, pp. 68-73 for a discussion of Aristotelian psychology.

The phrase "but easie to be thought" seems to suggest that the arras can partake, in some undetermined way, of the faculty of imagination. All one does is imagine what should be "wrought" or "portrahed." The reason that the arras is blank, except in the sense that one can imagine what should be woven into it, is that Alma is an innocent virgin, and the experiences of love have not yet revealed themselves. Whatever will be woven into the tapestries is in the future; it is all potential rather than actual, like the little Cupid himself. Alma is a:-

. . . virgin bright;
That had not yet felt Cupides wanton rage.

(2.9.18)

And Cupid is as different from his later self in Castle Joyous and the House of Busyrane, as the arras of the parlor is from the tapestries of these same places in the third book:-

And eke emongst them litle Cupid playd
His wanton sports, being returned late
From his fierce warres, and hauing from him layd
His cruell bow, wherewith he thousands hath dismayd.

(2.9.34.)

The two lower souls, vegetable and animal, are inseparable from the body. Hence, the journey to the intellectual soul must leave these two behind: ten steps, behind, in fact. The knights ascend by these alabaster steps to the "immortal" turret:-

. . . that great Ladie thence away them sought,
To vew her castles other wondrous frame.
Vp to a stately Turret she them brought,
Ascending by ten steps of Alablaster wrought.

That Turrets frame most admirable was,
Like highest heauen compassed around,
And lifted high above this earthly masse,
Which it suruew'd, as hils doen lower ground;

(2.9.44-5.)

These stanzas demonstrate Spenser's emphasis on a dualism of



body ("this earthly masse") and mind (the "other wondrous frame"). But despite such emphasis, he does not reject the tripartite division of the body into three souls. That the two distinctions (i.e., the dualism of mind and body, and the tripartite division of souls) could coexist easily with one another is reflected in earlier, but relevant, examples:-⁷

Now it is to be further known that the soul is of three parts: the one, wherein is the power of efficacy of growing, which is also in herbs and trees as well as in man, and that part is called vegetative. Another part, wherein man doth participate with all other things living, which is called sensitive, by reason that thereof the senses do proceed, which be distributed into divers instrumental parts of the body; as sight into the eyes, hearing to the ears, smelling to the nose, tasting to the mouth, feeling to every part of the body wherein is blood, without the which undoubtedly may be no feeling. The third part of the soul is named the part intellectual or of understanding, which is of all the other most noble, as whereby man is most like unto God, and is preferred before all other creatures. ⁸

The intellectual soul is, as Elyot suggests, a higher development of the vegetable and animal souls, and it distinguishes man from the beasts. It is "of all the other" the "most noble" and god-like. We are about to study this intellectual faculty, and as we do so we shall notice that Spenser insists, as does Elyot, on the divine qualities of the "part intellectual." Later on, in the eleventh canto of book three, Britomart will exclaim to Scudamour "we a God inuade," (3.11.22) and we shall recall Alma's wondrous

7. Aristotle argued the presence of three souls within the dualistic frame of the rational and irrational human body. See Copleston, vol. I, pt. 2, pp. 68-73.
8. Sir Thomas Elyot, The Book Named the Governor, ed. S.E. Lehmborg, 2nd ed. (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1962), pp. 224-225.

turret. And incidentally, Britomart's exclamation is made in the same numbered stanza (number twenty-two) as the famous "arithmological stanza" of the Alma episode. Perhaps this is a numerological reminder of the important House of Alma, with its god-like three-chambered mind.⁹

Before discussing the turret, it would be well to place Alma within this context and define her role. She is, as her name implies, the life-force which governs the house. The word alma literally means "soul" in Italian, and "life force" in Latin, and there is no good reason to doubt that Alma is, in fact, the totally unified human soul whose specific act is to keep the body the wondrous thing it is:-

Of all Gods workes, which do this world adorne,
There is no one more faire and excellent,
Then is mans body both for powre and forme,
Whiles it is kept in sober gouernment;
But none then it, more fowle and indecent,
Distempred through misrule and passions bace:
It growes a Monster, and incontinent
Doth loose his dignitie and natue grace.
Behold, who list, both one and other in this place.

(2.9.1.)

Alma is the governor of the house who has free access and absolute rule over each of the three souls: vegetable, animal and intellectual. But she is also the prisoner of the house, and she finds herself besieged by the base passions of Maleger which would transform her house into a "Monster." She warns Arthur and Guyon that she is a prisoner, for her "watch" says:-

9. Stanza (3.12.22.) is also significant and may also recall stanza (2.9.22.). In this later stanza we find the vicious Cupid who rejoices "in his cruell mind."

Fly, fly, good knights, (said he) fly fast away
 If that your liues ye loue, as meete ye should;
 Fly fast, and saue your selues from neare decay,
 Here may ye not haue entraunce, though we would:
 We would and would againe, if that we could;
 But thousand enemies about vs raue,
 And with long siege vs in this castle hould:
 Seuen yeares this wize they vs besieged haue,
 And many good knights slaine, that haue vs sought
 to saue.

(2.9.12.)

Thus, Alma is a prisoner. But she is also the entelechy of the body as well, and it would seem that Spenser believes that the human soul benefits by its contact with the flesh. Clearly, this episode is a celebration of the human soul's power to govern the body, and therefore, the emphasis is on the soul's act and the benefits which are provided thereby. Spenser seems to be following the Aristotelian tradition passed through the Middle Ages:-

. . . Aristotle does not uphold the Platonic dualism in the De Anima, for he makes soul to be the entelechy of the body, so that the two form one substance. Altogether Aristotle allows a much closer union between soul and body than did the Platonists: the tendency to look on the body as the tomb of the soul is not that of Aristotle. Rather is it for the good of the soul to be united with the body, since only so can it exercise its faculties. This was the view adopted by the mediaeval Aristotelians, such as St. Thomas, although many great Christian thinkers had spoken and continue to speak, in language very reminiscent of the Platonic tradition...¹⁰

As Copleston mentions, even the Aristotelians are liable to speak like Platonists when they happen to be Christians as well. This partially accounts for Spenser's emphasis on Alma's capability to govern, at the same time as she is described as a prisoner of her house.

The "other wondrous frame" symbolizes the mind and intellectual

10. Copleston, vol. I, pt. 2, p. 74.

soul. Its tripartite construction, and the entire psychology which Spenser diagrams, was imparted to the Elizabethans from "Plato and Aristotle, Hippocrates and Galen, and through the medieval commentators."¹¹ The three masculine counsellors of the tower reflect the faculty of each of their individual cells:-

The first of them could things to come forsee:
The next could of things present best aduize;
The third things past could keepe in memoree. . .

(2.9.49)

The saturnine Phantastes - whose name, alone, places him rightfully within the "cell fantastik" - sat in the "forepart" of the mind, and he:-

. . . had a sharpe foresight, and a working wit,
That neuer idle was, ne once could rest a whit.

(2.9.49)

Both his name and his "cell" involve him in the faculty of imagination. Corresponding with the function of imagination to assimilate a chaos of impressions from the senses, so as to enable the reason to act upon this raw material of thought, we find that the cell is flooded with fantastic visions:-

His chamber was dispaigned all within,
With sundry colours, in the which were writ
Infinite shapes of things dispersed thin;
Some such as in the world were neuer yit,
Ne can deuized be of mortall wit;
Some daily seene, and knowen by their names,
Such as in idle fantasies doe flit:
Infernal Hags, Centaurs, feendes, Hippodames,
Apes, lions, AEgles, Owles, fooles, louers, children,
Dames.

11. Daniel C. Boughner, 'Psychology of Memory in the "Faerie Queene",' PMLA, XLVII, 89.

And all the chamber filled was with flyes,
 Which buzzed all about, and made such sound,
 That they encombred all mens eares and eyes,
 Like many swarmes of Bees assembled round,
 After their hives with honny do abound:
 All those were idle thoughts and fantasies,
 Deuices, dreames, opinions vnsound,
 Shewes, visions, sooth-sayes, and prophesies;
 And all that fained is, as leasings, tales, and lies.

(2.9.50-51.)

In the first chamber of Busyrane's House we shall encounter a room as crowded as this and, significantly, it will be filled with visions, "leasings, tales, and lies."

These images from the "cell fantastik" are acted upon by the power of reason in the "cell rational." Again, the counsellor of the "cell rational" reflects the orderliness of reason. He is of "goodly reason, and graue personage. . ." (2.9.54.). And just as Alma occupies the parlor, which is the center of the entire House of Alma, so the counsellor of reason occupies the central part of the mind: Alma and her counsellor of reason are both, thereby, associated with one another as "golden means" within their respective contexts.

The images of the cell rational differ, as one would expect, from the fanciful visions of the cell fantastik. The thoughts of this middle cell are definitely involved in the most accurate perception of the human condition. Replacing the many visions - "Some such as in the world were neuer yit. . ." (2.9.50.) - we find a great deal that reflects the things that are, definitely, a part of man's world. The "other world" of imagination gives way to the reason of "this world," and the walls:-

Were painted faire with memorable gestes,
 Of famous Wisards, and with picturals
 Of Magistrates, of courts, of tribunals,
 Of commen wealthes, of states, of pollicy,

Of lawes, of iudgements, and of decretals;
 All artes, all science, all Philosophy,
 And all that in the world was aye thought wittily.

. . . There sate a man of ripe and perfect age,
 Who did them meditate all his life long,
 That through continual practise and vsage,
 He now was growne right wise, and wondrous sage.

(2.9.53-4.)

Significantly, Arthur and Guyon are so taken with the counsellor's "goodly reason, and graue personage," that they "his deciples both desir'd to be. . ." (2.9.54.).

But as Frances Yates has shown, memory was the most venerated of the mental faculties.¹² It is to the "cell memorial" that all of the reasonable impressions of the mind are given. The third counsellor stores the reasonable thoughts within his "hindmost" room. Daniel Boughner has demonstrated that Spenser's psychology differs, somewhat, from the most common Elizabethan psychology which placed imagination between reason and memory.¹³ But Spenser insisted that the thoughts pass through reason first, before being stored in the memory. Further, Amnestes (the reminder) seems to have been Spenser's invention. The

. . . chamber seemed ruinous and old,
 And therefore was remoued farre behind,
 Yet were the wels, that did the same vphold,
 Right firme and strong, though somewhat they declind;
 And therein sate an old old man, halfe blind,
 And all decrepit in his feeble corse,
 Yet liuely vigour rested in his mind . . .

. . .
 This man of infinite remembrance was,
 And things foregone through many ages held,
 Which he recorded still, as they did pas . . .

12. Frances A. Yates, The Art of Memory (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1969), p. 11.

13. Daniel C. Boughner, PMLA, XLVII, 89-96.

His chamber all was hangd about with rolles,
 And old records from auncient times deriu'd,
 Some made in books, some in long parchment scrollles,
 That were all worme-eaten, and full of canker holes.

(2.9.55,56,57.)

However much Arthur and Guyon admire the counsellor of reason, they are nonetheless drawn steadily toward Eumnestes, and the "cell memorial." Spenser's psychology traces thought in three precise stages: through the imagination, the reason, and the memory. This process will be of great importance to the interpretation of the House of Busyrane.

The three parts of the House of Alma represent the three souls: vegetable, animal and intellectual:-

The lowest form of soul is the nutritive or vegetable soul . . . which exercises the activities of assimilation and reproduction. It is found, not only in plants, but also in animals . . . 14

It is this soul which is reflected in the functions of Appetite, Diet and digestion. The parlor, in which we find the interior senses, and the arras which conveys its meaning through "thought," or imagination of some sort, represents the animal soul. This soul:-

. . . exercises the three powers of sense-perception,
 . . . desire, . . . and local motion . . . Imagination
 . . . follows on the sensitive faculty . . . 15

Significantly, the parlor is the place from which Alma governs the house, and it is therefore the seat of sense-perception, desire and local motion. And finally, there is the turret, which

. . . likest is vnto that heauenly towre,
 That God hath built for his owne blessed bowre . . .

(2.9.47.)

14. Copleston, vol. I, pt. 2, pp. 69-70.

15. Copleston, vol. I, pt. 2, p. 70.

and is the intellectual soul, and mind of man. For within the mind is an immortal spark of divinity. These three souls are governed by Alma, the human soul, who is a combination of all three. It is she who unifies the house by combining all of the three faculties of soul into one, and who mediates between the dualistic opposites of mind and body, spirit (in the intellectual soul) and flesh.

iii

Alma's mediation is argued numerologically, as Professor Fowler has demonstrated in his discussion on the "arithmological stanza" (2.9.22.):-

The frame thereof seemd partly circulare,
 And part triangular, O worke diuine;
 Those two the first and last proportions are,
 The one imperfect, mortall, foeminine;
 Th'other immortall, perfect, masculine,
 And twixt them both a quadrate was the base
 Proportioned equally by seven and nine;
 Nine was the circle set in heauens place,
 All which compacted made a goodly diapase.

Fowler's analysis, along numerological lines, suggests that Alma is associated with the unifying "quadrate" which forms the base of the house.¹⁶ As important as his arguments are, one need not rely exclusively on them to argue Alma's function. For example, there is another way of approaching the "circle" and "triangle", and this sheds light on Alma. Curiously enough, the satirical Jean de Meun provides a most relevant passage:-

Si n'en pot il pas assez dire,
 Car il ne peüst pas soufire
 A bien parfaitement entendre
 Ce qu'ongues riens ne pot comprendre
 Fors li ventres d'une pucele.
 Mais, senz faille, il est veirs que cele
 A cui li ventres en tendi
 Plus que Platons en entindi
 Car el sot des qu'el le portait,
 Don au porter se confortait,
 Qu'il iert l'espere merueillable
 Qui ne peut estre terminable,
 Qui par touz leus son centre lance,
 Ne leu n'a la circonference;

16. Fowler, Numbers, p. 287.

Qu'il iert li merveilleus triangles
 Don l'unité fait les treis angles,
 Ne li treï tout entirement
 Ne font que l'un tant seulement;
 C'est li cercles trianguliers,
 C'est li triangles circuliars
 Qui en la vierge s'ostela.
 N'en sot pas Platons jusque la;
 Ne nit pas la trine unité
 En cete simple trinitié,
 Ne la deïté souveraine
 Afublee de pel humaine . . .

(R.R., ed. Langlois, ll. 19119-19144,
 vol. 4, pp. 256-257.)

Plato did not know, but Spenser did. In this passage Jean de Meun expresses what no Christian could have forgotten even momentarily: that ultimately it is Christ who unites the circle and triangle for all time. From the unity of the One God, Christ descended into mortal flesh and blended the dualities of intellect (and spirit) and mortal flesh, and the geometric figures serve as symbols of this sacred mystery of the "deity hid in human skin." Christ is the archetype of the soul, and his example provides the faith in a world beyond this material one: indeed, it is his power to reconcile the opposites of circle and triangle, intellect and body, spirit and matter, which provides this faith. Since Christ provides the example for all souls, his ministrations between the opposites symbolized by the circle and triangle must be reflected in each individual. Alma's power to maintain her house by a just mediation of circle and triangle is therefore an imitation of the greater mystery of Christ; and the quadrate must, therefore, be a symbol of Alma, because it also blends the circle and triangle.

Alma and the "quadrate" are at the base of the house of Alma because they symbolize the mediation of the human soul. But, really, it is the trinity which accounts for the foundation of this house: there are three regions (body, parlor and mind), three

principal "cells" in the mind, three masculine counsellors, three principal characters (Alma, Arthur and Guyon), and three plane geometrical figures.

CHAPTER ONE: "CASTLE JOYOUS"

i

The third book begins Spenser's love debate, in which there are two major themes: following Chaucer, there is a consistent argument involving "mastery in love;" and there is the complementary discussion of what elements are capable of combining to form the most virtuous character. The first argument involves mostly the proper and equitable blend of masculine and feminine elements, and although it enjoys a great amount of emphasis in this book, yet its fullest ramifications are not evident until book three merges with book four. Generally speaking, Spenser has chosen to argue that mastery, on either side, is a danger in love, and that since the masculine and feminine natures both achieve completion through involvement in one another, that it is best to form an equitable and perfectly balanced relationship between husband and wife. In this way the strengths of the masculine nature are imparted to the feminine nature; the weakness of masculinity are, in a like manner, strengthened by feminine qualities, and so on.

Chaucer's solution to the problem of mastery in love is worked up into a philosophy in the Faerie Queene where we find various examples of lovers who are virtuous, or unvirtuous, according to principles of equity which should apply in love.

The second theme, involving the kinds of elements which combine to form virtuous characters, is very pronounced in the major episodes of book three. Basically, the third book discusses the love appropriate to the feminine nature, leaving the fourth

book to discuss the love appropriate to the masculine nature. Therefore, the elements which are necessary to the formation of a virtuous character are, in book three, exclusively involved in the feminine nature. We shall find that the proper blend of Venus and Diana is preferable. This argument is partially evident in the symbolic relationships between nature and art. The venerean nature is the most natural of all because it tends toward fruitful generation. But although this kind of venerean nature is important, and indispensable to the world, yet it benefits through some contact with art. The Diana element is simply one of the possible associations with art because it is, essentially, an artificial human trait which has no reality in the purest realm of nature.

A reader who has read only the episode describing Acrasia's bower would be inclined to distrust all art in Spenser; but as subsequent episodes clearly demonstrate, it is not the art which is bad, implicitly, but the uses and proportions of art which may exceed a proper relationship with nature. In human nature the natural, venerean potential for generation exists necessarily - as a result of man's Fall from a state of grace - in contact with art. In Spenser's symbolism, then, art implies all those things which human nature has created through knowledge. There are good arts and bad arts according to use and proper degree. And if one does not choose to temper the venerean nature with the kinds of arts which are capable of providing purpose and intellect, it is possible that the unprotected venerean nature may find itself mastered by an excessively sterile strain of art.

This, then, is precisely what happens in the two extreme episodes of book three. Both the houses of Malecasta and Busyrane

represent differing parts of the feminine, venerean nature which have become infected by Cupid's arts of love. As I intend to prove, the extreme episodes of Castle Joyous and the House of Busyrane represent the body and mind which have become infected by a Cupid who has altered from potential - as in the House of Alma - to act. The body and mind are, effectively, at war with one another because, although the Garden of Adonis episode occupies a "mean" position within this triad of episodes, it is incapable of solving the problem of love in human nature by reconciling these extremes. What Castle Joyous and the House of Busyrane both require is the strength of chastity.

Britomart, who is a proper blend of Venus and Diana, and a symbol of productive nature protected by the artificial armor, is a better unifying "mean" than the purely natural, venerean Garden in the sixth canto. Fallen human nature requires art in general; and feminine human nature specifically requires the art of chastity to protect the venerean potential for generation, and balance the invading arts of Cupid.

I intend to examine the three major episodes of this book in order to show that Castle Joyous and the House of Busyrane are analogous to the body and mind of Alma's house; but instead of being united in a just harmony by Alma, they are at war with one another because of the inability of the garden's purely natural realm to operate as a mean, harmonizing force. The Garden will be found to represent nature's processes, which are virtuous enough by themselves. But even though this may be so, it is nonetheless the case that the Garden has weaknesses which, in human nature, need the defensive, purposeful aid of art.

Putting it as briefly as possible, the Garden is the ideal

potential of feminine material generation. It is all nature, and all natural. But Castle Joyous represents the "excess" of the venerean nature in the body. Whereas Venus' lust produces fruitful generation in the Garden, when this same lust is allowed to exist untempered by defensive or purposeful arts in the feminine descendents of Eve, it produces the sterility of Malocasta's house. In the same way, the House of Busyrane represents the venerean mind which has become infected by Cupid's arts because it has no defence and intellectual strength of purpose. Again, the mindlessness of Venus' passion is productive when it functions within the purest realm of nature. But mindlessness, in fallen human nature, is a severe danger inasmuch as it, too, may lead to sterility and death.

Cupid's fleshly trials, in Castle Joyous, symbolize the dangers inherent in the totally venerean, feminine nature. Malecasta's name means "badly chaste," and her own particular kind of "pleasure" associates her with Venus. However, she is a false Venus because her lust produces almost the same kind of sterility as was found in the Bower of Bliss. The Garden's Venus is able to translate her lust into fruitful generation; Malecasta, on the other hand, yields only sterility through her involvement in Cupid's fleshly arts. Castle Joyous is a symbol of the degraded body, and we may see just how far from virtue Malecasta's parlor is when we compare it with Alma's.

When we first encounter this castle we are told that it is placed "for pleasure nigh that forrest syde . . ." (3.1.20.) and that the "Lady of delight" (3.1.31.) who governs this place insists on mastery in love. Britomart's statement regarding mastery in love is applied to Malecasta's six knights, and by extension, to the "Lady of delight" herself:-

Ne may loue be compeld by maisterie;
For soone as maisterie comes sweet loue anone
Taketh his nimble wings, and soone away is gone.

Then spake one of those sixe, There dwelleth here
Within this castle wall a Ladie faire,
Whose soueraine beautie hath no liuing pere,
Thereto so bounteous and so debonaire
That neuer any mote with her compare.
She hath ordaind this law, which we approue,
That euery knight, which doth this way repaire,
In case he haue no Ladie, nor no loue,
Shall doe vnto her seruice neuer to remoue.

But if he haue a Ladie or a Loue,
Then must he her forgoe with foule defame,
Or else with vs by dint of sword approue,

That she is fairer, then our fairest Dame,
As did this knight, before ye hither came.

(3.1.25-7.)

The six knights form a ladder of fleshly lust, as their names imply when they are listed in order:-

The first of them by name Gardante hight,
A iolly person, and of comely vew;
The second was Parlante, a bold knight,
And next to him Iocante did ensew;
Basciante did him selfe most curteous shew;
But fierce Bacchante seemd too fell and keene;
And yet in armes Noctante greater grew;
All were faire knights, and goodly well beseene,
But to faire Britomart they all but shadowes beene.

(3.1.45.)

Seeing, speaking, joviality, kissing, partying and late nights lead inevitably to lechery.¹ Since these knights are an extension of Malecasta, in the sense that they are her devices in lechery, Britomart's derision is aimed ultimately to this lady herself.

But since Britomart is an innocent in love, she is incapable of recognizing Malecasta's complete lust. The six knights are "all but shadowes" to her, indicating that like Maleger's troops, they have no real substance to her. For the champion of chaste married love does not yet conceive that it is possible to feign civility, as Malecasta does, and yet be so entirely lacking in virtue. As a blend of Venus and Diana, Britomart is receptive to Malecasta's pleasures, though she cannot guess where they lead. We find emphasis on the Diana element reflected in the following stanza:-

1. Thomas P. Roche, Jr., The Kindly Flame: a Study of the Third and Fourth Books of Spenser's Faerie Queene (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 67-68.

As when faire Cynthia, in darkesome night,
 Is in a noyous cloud enueloped,
 Where she may find the substaunce thin and light,
 Breakes forth her siluer beames, and her bright hed
 Discouers to thw world discomfited;
 Of the poore traueller, that went astray,
 With thousand belssings she is heried;
 Such was the beautie and the shining ray,
 With which faire Britomart gaue light vnto the day.

(3.1.43.)

But, although this side of her nature is her surest defence against the rampant cupidity of the castle, yet we find a more important statement about Britomart three stanzas later:-

For she was full of amiable grace,
 And manly terrour mixed therewithall,
 That as the one stird vp affections bace,
 So th'other did mens rash desires apall,
 And hold them backe, that would in error fall;
 As he, that hath espide a vermeill Rose,
 To which sharpe thornes and breres the way forstall,
 Dare not for dread his hardy hand expose,
 But wishing it far off, his idle wish doth lose.

(3.1.46.)

Here it is apparent that Britomart is a blend of opposites, since she both encourages and discourages affections and desires. Her venerean nature fills her with "amiable grace," and the chastity she possesses, as a complement to this nature, provides a "manly" terror. The image of the "vermeill" rose is appropriate to the maiden whose natural affections are guarded by the armor of chastity.

But in order for Britomart to understand fleshly passion she must be disarmed enough to receive Gardante's wound.² When

2. Britomart has already received this wound from Merlin's magic mirror (3.2.22.), and therefore the attack by Gardante is an allegory for her first attraction to Artegall. Britomart's adventures in Castle Joyous are parallel with the account of her first stirrings of love, described in canto 2: in both episodes she sees an image but neither understands it, nor feels its power working upon her until nightfall (when she is attacked by Cupid and Gardante).

she is wounded by Gardante she refrains from killing him, as she will later refrain from killing Busyrane, because she has no desire to exterminate the sexual pleasure toward which her wound will lead her. She is not wholly a Diana figure, but instead a mixture of the forces of Venus and Diana. She is meant to marry and be fruitful.³ After sustaining the wound she can re-arm herself with a new understanding of the fleshly pleasures, which the venerean side of her nature inclines her to. Her wound has allowed her to understand and enjoy the pleasures of love, and it is obvious that the six knights are no longer shadows to her. In like manner, she is now fully aware of Malecasta's true nature. But her chastity allows her the "manly" protection she requires until she can derive the strength she needs from her masculine lover. Though she appreciates the pleasures of love, she is protected from Malecasta's excesses by the "thorns," the armor, the arts of chastity.

Everything within Malecasta's castle is intended to "kindle fleshly lust" and sensual delight:-

. . . all the while sweet Musicke did diuide
 Her looser notes with Lydian harmony;
 And all the while sweet birdes thereto applide
 Their daintie layes and dulcit melody,
 Ay caroling of loue and iollity,
 That wonder was to heare their trim consort.

(3.1.40.)

The sweetness of the "looser notes" of music combines with the idyllic consort of birds to make the very atmosphere alive with beauty.⁴ As Britomart and Redcross penetrate to the heart of the

3. Merlin reveals Britomart's famous progeny to her in canto three.

4. Castle Joyous is almost an artificial reconstruction of a Rose garden.

castle, we are reminded of Guyon's journey into the Bower. There, as here, everything was intended to seduce the senses - with the major difference being that Acrasia represented pleasure in general, while Malecasta symbolizes only lustful, fleshly pleasures.⁵

The air was as sweet to Guyon in the Bower:-

Thereto the Heauens alwayes Iouiall,
 Lookt on them louely, still in stedfast state,
 Ne suffred storme nor frost on them to fall,
 Their tender buds or leaues to violate,
 Nor scorching heat, nor cold intemperate
 T'afflict the creatures, which therein did dwell,
 But the milde aire with season moderate
 Gently attempted, and disposd so well,
 That still it breathed forth sweet spirit and holesome
 smell.

(2.12.51.)

And this knight was careful not to suffer any "delight/To sincke into his sence, nor mind affect . . ." (2.12.53.). But Guyon had to be wary of all kinds of sensual pleasure, whereas it is pretty certain that all of the artifice of Malecasta's castle is devoted exclusively to sexual pleasure.

In Malecasta's "great chamber" we notice that, like the Bower, there is a superabundance of beauty and pleasure:-

But for to tell the sumptuous array
 Of that great chamber, should be labour lost:
 For liuing wit, I weene, cannot display
 The royall riches and exceeding cost,
 Of euery pillour and of euery post;
 Which all of purest bullion framed were,
 And with great pearles and pretious stones embost,
 That the bright glister of their beames cleare
 Did sparckle forth great light, and glorious did appeare.

(3.1.32.)

5. C.S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love: a Study in Medieval Tradition 2nd ed. (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1948), pp. 339-340. Lewis finds that Acrasia represents vicious pleasure in general, but that Malecasta attacks chastity in particular.

But all these riches are stifling to the spirit; they tend to appeal to the fleshly appetites by cutting off the heavenly light and inspiration which infuses the mind. Here the only light which appears - and which sparkles with great radiance - is the artificial light from the gems and pearls within the chamber. In the House of Busyrane we shall again discover a closed interior with artificial trappings, only this later house will symbolize the mind which has been usurped by a false cupidity. Castle Joyous symbolizes the body which suffers Cupid's mastery.

The stifling interior of the chamber, (along with the birdsong, the lady of delight, and all of the exceeding riches) recalls to mind one of Chaucer's temples. In the Parliament of Fowls we encounter a goddess of earthly, material passion: Venus Pandemos. She is surrounded by

. . . sykes hoote as fyr . . .
Whiche sikes were engendred with desyr.

(Parliament ll. 246, 8.)

Her porter is Richesse; and Venus reclines "on a bed of gold"

(l. 265):-

And in a prive corner in disport
Fond I venus and hire porter Richesse,
That was ful noble and hautayn of hyre port.
Derk was that place, but afterward lightnesse
I saw a lyte, unnethe it myghte be lesse,
And on a bed of gold she lay to reste,
Til that the hote sonne gan to weste.

Hyre gilte heres with a golden thred
Ibounden were, untressed as she lay,
And naked from the brest unto the hed
Men myghte hire sen; and, sothly for to say,
The remenaunt was well kevered to my pay,
Ryght with a subtyl coverchef of Valence -
Ther nas no thikkere cloth of no defense.

The place yaf a thousand labours sote,
And Bachus, god of wyn, sat hire besyde,
And Ceres next, that doth of hunger boote,
And, as I seyde, amyddes lay Cypride,

To whom on knees two yonge folk ther cryde
 To ben here helpe. But thus I let hire lye . . .

(Parliament 11. 268-279)

Malecasta is a false Venus Pandemos, by comparison, because unlike Chaucer's Venus she generates nothing which transcends fleshly lust: not even lineage. As we compare Malecasta to Venus Pandemos we notice that her surroundings are similar to Venus' and that she, too, reclines half-naked upon a bed of gold. But, she is only a travesty of Chaucer's goddess. If she represents any kind of love at all it is even lower on the scale than that of Pandemos. It can only be Pico's "amore bestiale."⁶ Lust has become an end in itself.

Perhaps the light in Venus' temple was very slight, but nonetheless it was natural light. Chaucer indicated that some natural things existed in her temple - though very few, as the "Garlondes ful of freshe floures newe . . ." (l. 259). And, also, Venus keeps to her golden couch only in the daylight hours (ll. 265-66) which indicates that she is associated, in some natural way, with the movements of the sun; that is to say, that her powers are involved in nature. The dim light is the light from nature which just manages to penetrate within these confines. But quite clearly, there is every indication that the natural light of the sun is excluded from Malecasta's chamber. Indeed, the light which shines there is wholly artificial, as we have seen:-

6. Edgar Wind, Pagan Mysteries, p. 139.

Thence they were brought to that great Ladies vew,
 Whom they found sitting on a sumptuous bed,
 That glistred all with gold and glorious shew,
 As the proud Persian Queenes accustomed:
 She seemd a woman of great bountihed,
 And of rare beautie, sauuing that askaunce
 Her wanton eyes, ill signes of womanhed,
 Did roll too lightly, and too often glaunce,
 Without regard of grace, or comely amenaunce.

. . .

Supper was shortly dight and downe they sat,
 Were they were serued with all sumptuous fare,
 Whiles fruitfull Ceres, and Lyaeus fat
 Poured out their plenty

(3.1.41, 51.)

Amidst these lavish surroundings Malecasta, the false Venus
 Pandemos, pours out her enticements between the overflowing cups
 at the feast:-

Nought wanted there, that dainty was and rare;
 And aye the cups their bancks did ouerflow,
 And aye between the cups, she did prepare
 Way to her loue, and secret darts did throw . . .

(3.1.51.)

Malecasta's love is called hate because it leads not toward
 any kind of order, but to chaos and death:-⁷

For she was giuen all to fleshly lust,
 And poured forth in sensual delight,
 That all regard of shame she had discust,
 And meet respect of honour put to flight:
 So shamelesse beauty soone becomes a loathly sight.

7. Malecasta opposes the destined order of Britomart's love by opposing chastity. Malecasta would replace order with chaos. Her attacks on the feminine nature are supported by Ate and Duessa who launch corresponding attacks on the masculine nature in book four.

. . .

For this was not to loue, but lust inclin'd;
For loue does alwayes bring forth bounteous deeds,
And in each gentle hart desire of honour breeds.

Nought so of loue this looser Dame did skill,
But as a coale to kindle fleshly flame,
Giuing the bridle to her wanton will,
And treading vnder foote her honest name:
Such loue is hate, and such desire is shame.

(3.1.48,49,40.)

Acrasia appealed to her victims through a vicious excess of all pleasures, and the results of her wiles were sterility, delusion, loss of humanity, and death. Malecasta appeals to the sexual appetites, exclusively, but her "bower" (3.1.42.) is every bit as dangerous. The:-

. . . image of superfluous riotize,
Exceeding much the state of meane degree,

(3.1.33.)

is every bit as beguiling. The venerean nature has become an image of "superfluous riotize" resulting from a total lack of chastity, and the result of this folly has been the total degeneration of the feminine nature: the body has become sterile through a bitter excess.

iii

Malecasta may be symbolic of the feminine, venerean nature which has become diseased by lust; but further, her context is symbolic of that part of the dualism in the human body which is most susceptible to fleshly lust. The "great chamber" of Castle Joyous is analogous to Alma's parlor. The major difference is that Cupid has ravaged the chamber of Castle Joyous to such an extent that it has become, effectively, the opposite of Alma's parlor.

Clearly, the major difference between these places lies in the fact that the Cupid of Alma's parlor is potentially dangerous, while the Cupid of Malecasta's chamber is actually dangerous. In Alma's parlor Cupid plays wantonly, but without his dreadful weapons:-

And eke amongst them litle Cupid playd
 His wanton sports, being returned late
 From his fierce warres, and hauing from him layd
 His cruell bow, wherewith he thousands hath dismayd.

(2.9.34.)

Alma has not felt Cupid's wanton rage as yet, and consequently, the parlor reflects the quality of innocence:-

Thence backe againe faire Alma led them right,
 And soone into a goodly Parlour brought,
 That was with royall arras richly dight,
 In which was nothing pourtrahed, nor wrought,
 Not wrought, nor pourtrahed, but easie to be thought.

And in the midst thereof vpon the floure,
 A louely beuy of faire Ladies sate,
 Courted of many a iolly Paramoure,
 The which them did in modest wise amate,
 And eachone sought his lady to aggrate:
 And eke amongst them litle Cupid playd . . .

(2.9.33-4.)

The romanticism of this scene, full of fair ladies and jolly "paramours", elicits the feeling of innocence which is appropriate to Alma and her house; indeed, the quality of innocence becomes quite obvious in comparison with Malecasta's chamber:-

So was that chamber clad in goodly wize,
 And round about it many beds were dight,
 As whilome was the antique worldes guize,
 Some for vntimely ease, some for delight,
 As pleased them to vse, that vse it might:
 And all was full of Damzels, and of Squires,
 Dauncing and reueling both day and night,
 And swimming deepe in sensuall desires,
 And Cupid still emongst them kindled lustfull fires.

(3.1.39.)

One line from each stanza tells the tale:-

And eke emongst them litle Cupid playd;

. . .

And Cupid still emongst them kindled lustfull fires.

There is more than a spatial distance dividing these episodes.

In comparing these stanzas we notice that the poetic diction is dissimilar in each case. Malecasta's guests are damzels and squires; Alma's are fair ladies and jolly paramours. But most important, the characters act entirely differently according to the nature of their surroundings. Within Alma's parlor there are none of the sumptuous beds placed for ease and delight. And the ladies are free to sit modestly upon the floor (2.9.34.) and discourse, perhaps, of playful love. In so doing, they act differently from the damzels and squires who dance and revel both day and night and immerse themselves in sensual, fleshly desires.

But in each place the one central symbol which reflects the characteristics we have been discussing is the arras. Alma's arras is "no wrought, nor pourtrahed, but easie to be thought . . ." (2.9.33.). This, in itself, suggests that all experience of love

is in the future, and that such future experiences as Alma can imagine from the deceptively playful Cupid are transmitted to the yet undecorated tapestries.

From the descriptions of Malecasta's tapestries it would seem that the lustful fires of Castle Joyous have frozen their designs into the unvarying story of Venus and Adonis. Perhaps, the fact that the flexibility of Alma's arras (i.e., easy to be thought) is meant as a telling contrast with the inflexible tapestries of Castle Joyous. Malecasta's lust is so singleminded that the tapestries which might ordinarily vary their patterns according to thought, are now entirely fixed on the sterility of Venus' love for Adonis. There is, of course the other possibility that the tapestries are meant to be fixedly woven with the experience of life and that, therefore, a bad life carries its own kind of retribution with it insofar as the interior senses of the body must always reflect on the images portrayed within these tapestries. In this latter case, the tapestries could act as the conscience which records the genuine nature of the individual. In both cases, it is obvious that Malecasta's tapestries must reflect, symbolically, all of the greed, lust, obsession, degradation, and sterility of her nature.

Since the story of Venus and Adonis is of such importance to the third book, we shall look closely at Malecasta's tapestries. It is interesting to make the preliminary observation that the Venus of the tapestries employs devices which are familiar to the reader, and which have been previously employed by the false Venus, Acrasia. Furthermore, the story of Venus and Adonis which is told in the tapestries does not differ significantly from the continuation

of the story in the Garden of Idonis, except that the tapestries reflect sterility and the Garden is obviously fruitful. All of this sheds light on Malecasta. Malecasta has, as I shall prove, degraded the venerean nature (which is generally susceptible to lustful pleasure, and which lacks intellect) and robbed it of its purposeful generative aspects, by emphasizing lust as an end in itself. In the Garden sexual pleasure plays an important role. But Malecasta, like Acrasia, has managed to make pleasure her goal; and again, like Acrasia, she has eroded the natural delight of love by artifice. Her bower is every bit as artificial as Acrasia's - and every bit as sterile. Later on, we shall see how the mindlessness of the Garden, which within that context is a virtue, is wholly destructive in the House of Busyrane, which symbolizes the human mind.

iv

Malecasta's tapestries are symbolic of the kind of disease which infects Castle Joyous, but it is only through a comparison with the virtuous story of Venus and Adonis, in the sixth canto, that these tapestries reveal themselves as sterile. Indeed, the Venus-Adonis story in the tapestries contains all of the sensual delight of the Garden, but none of the fruitfulness. This, of course, is confirmation that Malecasta has stressed the lustful aspects of love to the point where the natural, productive purposes of human love are totally lost to her. The emphasis on sensual detail is of prime importance to Malecasta's tapestries, even as to the Great Hall, and the lady of delight herself:-

The wals were round about apparell'd
 With costly clothes of Arras and of Tours,
 In which with cunning hand was pourtrahed
 The loue of Venus and her Paramoure
 The faire Adonis, turned to a flowre,
 A worke of rare device, and wondrous wit.
 First did it shew the bitter balefull stowre,
 Which her assayd with many a feruent fit,
 When first her tender hart was with his beutie smit.

(3.1.34.)

In the first place we notice that the subject of these tapestries is Venus' lust and melancholy passion. This is the dominant key. Next, the tapestries describe Venus' enticements:-

Then with what sleights and sweet allurements she
 Entyst the Boy, as well that art she knew,
 And wooed him her Paramoure to be;
 Now making girlands of each flowre that grew,
 To crowne his golden lockes with honour dew;
 Now leading him into a secret shade
 From his Beauperes, and from bright heauens vew,
 Where him to sleepe she gently would perswade,
 Or bathe him in a fountaine by some couert glade.

And whilst he slept, she ouer him would spread
 Her mantle, colour'd like the starry skyes,
 And her soft armes lay vnderneath his head,
 And with ambrosiall kisses lulle his eyes;
 And whilst he bath'd, with her two crafty spyes,
 She secretly would search each daintie lim,
 And throw into the well sweet Rosemaryes,
 And fragrant violets, and Pances trim,
 And euer with sweet Nectar she did sprinkle him.

(3.1.35-6.)

Venus' devices and arts in love are entirely devoted to fleshly lust, and she is not very different from Acrasia, so far as we can tell. She manages to entice Adonis, lead him into a "secret shade," and lull him to sleep. This scene is not so very different from one which the reader encountered only some fifty stanzas previously:-

There, whence that Musick seemed heard to bee,
 Was the faire Witch her selfe now solacing,
 With a new Louer, whom through sorcere
 And witchcraft, she from farre did thither bring:
 There she had him now layd a slombering,
 In secret shade, [my italics] after long wanton ioyes:
 Whilst round about them pleasauntly did sing
 Many faire Ladies, and lasciuious boyes,
 That euer mixt their song with light licentious toyes.

And all that while, right ouer him she hong,
 With her false eyes fast fixed in his sight,
 As seeking medicine, whence she was stong,
 Or greedily depasturing delight:
 And oft inclining downe with kisses light,
 For feare of waking him, his lips bedewd,
 And through his humid eyes did sucke his spright,
 Quite molten into lust and pleasure lewd;
 Where with she sighed soft, as if his case she rewd.

(2.12.72-3.)

Neither Venus nor Acrasia love openly, and hence, virtuously. Instead, both are crafty and excessively artful in their enticements. Both seem to regard their lovers as if they were simply another kind of prey which must be led into a secret shade, disarmed, and put into a trance. And once the prey is entranced, these women enjoy their loves "in secret vnespyde." The Venus of the tapestries is

similar to Acrasia, but in some way different from the Venus of the Garden of Adonis. The difference is partly one of context. The Garden's Venus is no less desirous of Adonis, and she even retains her secretive nature, but her Garden is just the proper sort of place for this kind of passion. It is the place of generation and decay, where Venus' passion is totally natural. Indeed, here is the very crux of the matter: Venus' passion remains largely the same in the Garden, as in the tapestries. She is still secretive, and she still reaps "sweet pleasure" from Adonis; but neither she, nor her Garden of Adonis, employ art or artifice. Acrasia's false Eden was constructed entirely of art, to the detriment of nature; Venus' true Eden (the Garden of Adonis) is constructed entirely of nature; and Malecasta's own brand of "love" is symbolized in the tapestries which relate a story of the natural, venerable nature degraded by art to the point of sterility.

Malecasta's house borders the false Bower of Bliss - perhaps this is the very forest which yields the pleasure Malecasta desires. We may note how much closer the tapestries are, in tone, to the Bower of Bliss, than to the Garden of Adonis, by comparing the tapestries and Garden. Venus' bower is explicitly denied any influence of art in the Garden:-

And in the thickest couert of that shade,
 There was a pleasant arbour, not by art,
 But of the trees owne inclination made,
 Which knitting their rancke braunches part to part,
 With wanton yuie twyne entrayld athwart,
 And Eglantine, and Caprifole emong,
 Fashiond aboue within their inmost part,
 That nether Phoebus beams could through them throng,
 Nor Aeolus sharp blast could worke them any wrong.

. . .

There want faire Venus often to enioy
 Her deare Adonis ioyous company,
 And reape sweet pleasure of the wanton boy;
 There yet, some say in secret he does ly;
 Lapped in flowres and pretious spycery . . .

(3.6.44, 46.)

It might seem that is the same bower described in the tapestries; both are unmistakably natural. But, from the beginning of the story in the tapestries it is apparent that this Venus uses craft, and certain allurements, which remind us of Acrasia. She uses arts and devices to achieve her ends. The Garden's Venus, however, is wholly natural. The result of this Venus' natural sexual desire is the same for her as it is for all the natural world: the generation of offspring and the creation of eternity through change:-

And sooth it seemes they say: for he may not
 For euer die, and euer buried bee
 In balefullnight, where all things are forgot;
 All be he subiect to mortalitie,
 Yet is eterne in mutabilitie,
 And by succession made perpetuall,
 Transformed oft, and chaunged diuerslie:
 For him the Father of all formes they call;
 Therefore needs mote he liue, that liuing giues to all.

There now he liueth in eternall blis,
 Ioying his goddesse, and of her eniuyd:
 Ne feareth he henceforth that foe of his,
 Which with his cruell tuske him deadly cloyd:
 For that wilde Bore, the which him once annoyd,
 She firmly hath emprisoned for ay,
 That her sweet loue his malice mote auoyd,
 In a strong rocky Caue, which is they say,
 Hewen vnderneath that Mount, that none him losen may.

(3.6.47-8.)

Because the Garden's Venus is wholly natural she retains the ability to enjoy her lover at the same time as she has the power to alter his fate. It is because she can love Adonis within a wholly natural context, without the other Venus' devices, and corrupting arts, that she need not fear the boar of lust or chaos.⁸ It is excessive art and craft which transforms natural

8. The boar is usually interpreted as a symbol of chaos, lust or winter. See Kathleen Williams, Spenser's Faerie Queene: The World of Glas (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), p. 104.

affection and kindly joy into a destructive monster. And not only can Venus imprison the boar, she can also find the necessary power to help keep Adonis eternal through mutability. Thus, the wholly natural Venus avoids the destructiveness of lust and helps to create, at the same time, an eternity through the successive generations of lineage.

The Venus of the tapestries can do neither:-

So did she steale his heedelesse hart away,
 And ioyd his loue in secret vnespyde.
 But for she saw him bent to cruell play,
 To hunt the saluage beast in forrest wyde,
 Dreadfull of daunger, that mote him betyde,
 She oft and oft aduiz'd him to refraine
 From chase of greater beasts, whose brutish pryde
 Mote breed him scath vnwares: but all in vaine;
 For who can shun the chaunce, that dest'ny doth ordaine?

Lo, where beyond he lyeth languishing,
 Deadly engored of a great wild Bore,
 And by his side the Goddesse groueling
 Makes for him endlesse mone, and euermore
 With her soft garment wipes away the gore,
 Whiche staines his snowy skin with hatefull hew:
 But when she saw no help might him restore,
 Him to a dainty flower she did transmew,
 Which in the cloth was wrought, as if it liuely grew.

(3.1.37-8.)

Clearly, the tapestry's Venus is neither as natural, nor as powerful, as the Garden's Venus. For although her story includes the metamorphosis into a flower it is apparent that the story ends here. The final scene focuses in on Adonis' death and his apparently fruitless transformation into a flower. The tapestries end on the same note on which they began: Venus' melancholy passion.

The whole of the Venus-Adonis story, as related in Malecasta's tapestries, is debased by an excessive emphasis on feminine, venerean lust, and the devices and arts necessary to the

consummation of that lust. The story begins and concludes with Venus' passion, which is natural enough in origin. But the overall picture of her courtship of Adonis reveals the extent to which she employs art: she entices, leads her prey into a secret shade, lulls him into a trance-like sleep, and enjoys him. She acts precisely like Acrasia. Her reward is evident in the final stanza when we find that her passion has made her impotent in comparison with the Garden's Venus. All she can do is transform her lover into a flower, for no apparent reason; and all that is left afterward is the image of a degraded and impotent goddess grovelling in sorrow before a useless plant. Clearly, the tapestries reflect one significant point: when the venerean nature turns to excess through too great an involvement in Cupid's arts, it becomes sterile. To this Venus, pleasure has become an end in itself, and therefore, the fruitfulness of the venerean nature is lost to her; since the tapestries reflect on Castle Joyous, the same must be applied to Malecasta. Malecasta is, then, an image of the venerean nature degraded by excessive lust and the untempered arts and devices appertaining to that lust.

Shakespeare's handling of the Venus-Adonis story is quite similar to Spenser's in the tapestries of Castle Joyous. His Venus is, for example, altogether too masterful and artful. Adonis is even made to comment on her falsehoods - particularly in relation to her enticements and devices in love. We find that Shakespeare's Venus appeals to her lover through sensual delights, that she employs devices in love, she leads her prey into a secret shade, and finally, she is apparently impotent in the face of Adonis' death by the boar's tusk.

Adonis' rejection of Venus' devices in love raises the distinction between love (which brings forth bounteous deeds) and lust (which is fained and false and which devalues the love). Adonis clearly perceives the artfulness of lust, and he rejects Venus' proposals on the grounds that they lead not to the fruitfulness of generation, as Venus falsely claims, but to sterility and death:-

If loue haue lent you wentie thousand tongues,
And euerie tongue more mouing then your owne,
Bewitching like the wanton Marmajads songs,
Yet from mine eare the tempting tune is blowne,
For know my heart stands armed in mine eare,
And will not let a false sound enter there.

Lest the deceiuing harmonie should ronne,
Into the quiet closure of my brest,
And then my litle heart were quite vndone,
In his bed-chamber to be bard of rest,
No Ladie, no, my heart longs not to grone,
But soundly sleeps, while now it sleeps alone.

What haue you vrg'd, that I can not reprove?
The path is smooth that leadeth on to danger,
I hate not loue, but your deuise in loue,
That lends embracements vnto euery stranger,
You do it for increase, ô straunge excuse!
When reason is the bawd to lusts abuse.

Call it not loue, for loue to heauen is fled,
 Since sweating lust on earth vsurpt his name,
 Vnder whose simple semblance he hath fed,
 Vpon fresh beautie, blotting it with blame;
 Which the hot tyrant staines, & soone bereaues:
 As Caterpillers do the tender leaues.

Loue comforteth like sun-shine after raine,
 But lusts effect is tempest after sunne,
 Loues gentle spring doth alwayes fresh remaine,
 Lusts winter comes, ere sommer halfe be donne:
 Loue surfets not, lust like a glutton dies:
 Loue is all truth, lust full of forged lies.

Nothing could be more pertinent to Spenser's Castle Joyous episode than these lines, for lust and love are contrasted with one another and found to be artificial and natural, respectively. Furthermore, although Venus claims to love on the natural grounds that she desires increase, Adonis perceives that it is her lust which is more important to her, and which has artfully provided her with a natural argument. Hence, he rejects the kind of reason which has become a "bawd to lusts abuse," and suggests that in spite of such false reasons, the rewards of lust are "tempest after sunne" and "winter . . . ere sommer halfe be donne." Thus, he totally rejects Venus' arguments as not simply natural truth abused by the artifice of lust, but as an outright lie. Venus' lust leads not towards fruitfulness of any sort, but toward sterility. Like the story in Malecasta's tapestries, Shakespeare's poem concludes on the sterile image of the goddess grovelling impotently before the flower. Shakespeare so far denies any creativity associated with lust that he will not even allow Venus the power to transform Adonis into the flower, as Spenser does.

The sensual nature of Shakespeare's Venus is even more obvious than in Spenser's tapestries. Venus' lust is a veritable

"banquet" of the senses:-

What canst thou talke (quoth she) hast thou a tong?
 O would thou hadst not, or I had no hearing,
 Thy marmalides voice hath done me double wrong,
 I had my lode before, now prest with bearing,
 Mellodious discord, heauenly tune harsh sounding,
 Eares deep sweet musik, & harts deep sore wounding.

Had I no eyes but eares, my eares would loue,
 That inward beautie and inuisible,
 Or were I deafe, thy outward parts would moue
 Ech part in me, that were but sensible,
 Though neither eyes, nor eares, to heare nor see,
 Yet should I be in loue, by touching thee.

Say that the sence of feeling were bereft me,
 And that I could not see, nor heare, nor touch,
 And nothing but the verie smell were left me,
 Yet would my loue to thee be still as much,
 For frô the stillitorie of thy face excelling,
 Coms breath perfumd, that breedeth loue by smelling.

But oh what banquet wert thou to the tast,
 Being nourse, and feeder of the other foure

(Venus and Adonis, st. 72-5,
 ll. 427-446, pp. 48-49.)

But Venus' sensual mastery raises the spectres of jealousy and murderous lust. Her possessive mastery is very like that of a miser for his gold - Spenser makes just this comparison in the story of the jealous Malbecco. Jealousy can arise simply from mastery in love, since it is founded essentially on greedy possessiveness, and thus Venus fears that just such an unwelcome "guest" will "disturb the feast":-

Would they not wish the feast might euer last,
 And bid suspition double locke the dore;
 Lest jealousie that sower vnwelcome guest,
 Should by his stealing in disturbe the feast?

(Venus and Adonis, st. 75, ll.
 447-450, pp. 49-50.)

But jealousy is responsible for implanting the image of the boar in Venus' mind, signifying that her jealous fears have foreseen both the end of her affair, and the force which will

be responsible for that end. There is, fairly clearly, a distinction between the jealousy (which implants the image of the boar) and the boar itself:-

For where loue raignes, disturbing iealousie,
Doth call him selfe affections centinell,
Giues false alarmes, suggesteth mutinie,
And in a peacefull houre doth crie, kill, kill,
Distempring gentle loue in his desire,
As aire, and water do abate the fire.

This sower informer, this bate-breeding spie,
This canker that eates vp loues tender spring,
This carry-tale, dissentious iealousie,
That sometime true newes, sometime false doth bring,
Knocks at my heart, and whispers in mine eare,
That if I loue thee, I thy death should feare.

(Venus and Adonis, st. 109-110,
ll. 649-660, pp. 66-67.)

Literally, jealousy warns Venus that it is specifically her love which will be responsible for Adonis' death. We know that Venus' love is really lust, which consists of a masterful banquet of the senses. Therefore, the boar must symbolize Venus' animal lust which jealousy warns will, in Adonis' words, end spring "ere sommer halfe be donne." The image of the boar is the image of Venus' own destructive lust:-

And more then so, presenteth to mine eye,
The picture of an angrie chafing boare,
Vnder whose sharpe fange, on his backe doth lye,
An image like thy selfe, all staynd with goare,
Whose blood vpon the fresh flowers being shed,
Doth make the droop with grief, and hang the hed.

(Venus and Adonis, st. 111, ll.
661-666, p. 67.)

The image of the boar standing above Adonis who, "on his back doth lie," is almost a sexual one. This association of the boar with Venus' own destructive animal passions is later made quite explicit:-

But this foule, grim, and vrehin-snowted Boare,
Whose downeward eye still looketh for a graue:
Ne're saw the beautilous liuerie that he wore,
Withesse the intertainment that he gaue.

If he did see his face, why then I know,
He thought to kisse him, and hath kild him so.

Tis true, tis true, thus was Adonis slaine,
He ran vpon the Boare with his sharpe speare,
Who did not whet his teeth at him againe,
But by a kisse thought to persuade him there.
And nouseling in his flanke the louing swine,
Sheath'd vnaware the tuske in his soft groine.

Had I bin tooth'd like him I must confesse,
With kissing him I should haue kild him first,
But he is dead, and neuer did he blesse
My youth with his, the more am I accurst.

(Venus and Adonis, st. 185-187,
ll. 1105-1120, pp. 102-104.)

Lust is very like the "urchin-snouted boar" because it dwells on the sensual, fleshly appetites to the exclusion of the love which has fled to heaven. And here, it is clearly Venus' lust which has emasculated the lover. Lust is responsible for making Adonis sterile, and therefore Adonis' fear of the death and sterility associated with fleshly lust has been proven justifiable.

Shakespeare's rendering of the myth is closely akin to Spenser's in the tapestries of Castle Joyous. In Malecasta's house lust is encouraged by artful devices, and hence, the boar - or the destructive nature of lust - is able to run freely. In the end of the story described in the tapestries we are left to ponder the effects of rampant lust. But in the Garden of Adonis the boar is imprisoned:-

There now he [Adonis] liueth in eternall blis,
Ioying his goddesse, and of her enioyd;
Ne feareth he hanceforth that foe of his,
Which with his cruell tuske him deadly cloyd:
For that wilde Bore, the which him once annoyd,
She [Venus] firmly hath emprisoned for ay,
That her sweet loue his malice mote auoyd,
In a strong rocky Caue, which is they say,
Hewen vnderneath that Mount, that none him losen may.

And this imprisonment yields the fruitfulness and fecundity of the entire natural world. Thus, when the sexual pleasure of love is placed within a wholly natural context - far from the corrupting influence of art - we have fruitfulness and life as the result, instead of death and sterility. The boar need not be killed, only mastered and brought within proper bounds.

Indeed, when we come to recognize the enchanter Busyrane as a distorted image of masculine power (distilled and intensified from Amoret's perception of Scudamour) we shall find that he, too, must be mastered and brought within bounds. But like the boar, he must not be killed. It is never Spenser's purpose to eliminate the animal forces appertaining to love: only to moderate them, and place them within the most suitable contexts.¹⁰

10. Busyrane may recall the boar by his impulsive rush at Amoret (recalling the boar's destructive charge at Adonis) in (3.12.32.). Britomart intervenes - and takes the wound meant for the maiden Amoret.

So far we have noticed a consistent emphasis on the distinction between love and lust in connection with the feminine, venerean nature. When the sexual pleasure of the feminine nature is kept strictly within the natural context of generation and decay, as in the Garden of Adonis, the destructive elements of lust are avoided. But when art and artifice intrude on the purely natural aspects of generation - which is an inescapable contingency in fallen human nature - there must be a proper blend of these elements, or else nature may be degraded by art.

One of the most important of all arguments ranging throughout the entire Faerie Queene involves precisely this distinction between nature and art.¹¹ The argument is largely begun in the Bower of Bliss:-

A place pickt out by choice of best alieue,
That natures worke by art can imitate:
In which what euer in this worldly state
Is sweet, and pleasing vnto liuing sense,
Or that may dayntiest fantasie aggrate,
Was poured forth with plentifull dispence,
And made there to abound with lauish affluence.

(2.12.42.)

The Bower is:-

. . . beautifide
With all the ornaments of Floraes pride,
Where with her mother Art, as half in scorne

11. I have already shown that this is a traditional theme and that it turns up, conspicuously, in the Parliament of Fowls and the House of Fame. C.S. Lewis discussed this theme in detail in The Allegory of Love, pp. 324-6.

Of niggard Nature, like a pompous bride
 Did decke her, and too lauishly adorne,
 When forth from virgin bowre she comes in th'early
 morne.

(2.12.50.)

. . .

One would have thought, (so cunningly, the rude,
 And scorned parts were mingled with the fine,)
 That nature had for wantonnesse ensude
 Art, and that Art at nature did repine;
 So striuing each th'other to vndermine,
 Each did the others worke more beautifie;
 So diff'ring both in wills, agreed in fine:
 So all agreed through sweet diuersitie,
 This Gardin to adorne with all varietie.

(2.12.59.)

C.S. Lewis has taught us how to read this episode by demonstrating how the art and artifice of the Bower has totally degraded nature.¹²

In the Garden of Adonis we find just the opposite of the Bower; for here nature reigns in its purest state. If the Bower was, in the final analysis, composed entirely of art, the Garden is wholly natural:-

So faire a place, as Nature can deuize.

(3.6.29.)

The wholly natural Garden contrasts in several ways with the Bower: Acrasia and Venus are false and true "Venuses;" the false Genius of the Bower opposes the true Genius of the Garden; the pleasures of the Bower are sterile while those of the Garden are eternally fruitful; Acrasia attempts to avoid the necessity of death and decay, while Venus accepts its inevitable presence

12. C.S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love*, pp. 324-326; 330 ff.

in her paradise. Clearly, the Garden's fruitfulness which results from nature's uninhibited and unselfconscious procreative functions is a virtue in comparison to the strained, discordant harmony of the sterile Bower.

But though this may seem so, yet nature, and nature's processes, are beyond moral judgment: the garden is neither good nor bad, virtuous nor unvirtuous, since nature is totally amoral. On the other hand, there is no question that the Bower is evil because it is a place where human artifice has degraded nature. The reason for insisting on this distinction is that it prepares the way for arguing that the Garden was not meant to be an ideal for human nature. Spenser never rejected the claims of art in the human personality - only the claims of excessive and degrading arts. Spenser's Garden describes nature's most mysterious and universal forces: those of generation and decay. Although great creating nature may, in some ways, be considered a foundation of human nature, yet in man it is impossible to isolate it and keep it wholly apart from art. Man surpasses the natural world through knowledge, intellect and art. If nature is properly blended with art, the result is clearly a favorable one for man.

Indeed, as we come to examine the Temple of Venus in the fourth book we shall find that the temple is a proper blend of nature and art. Scudamour reminds us of Guyon who attempted to enter the Bower, for Scudamour must pass certain trials before he is allowed his penetration. And again, like Guyon in the Bower, although he finds that this place is a paradise, he carefully rejects its appeals in order to continue his journey to its interior. Where Guyon was right to reject the artificial

appeals to the senses, Scudamour proves faulty in rejecting the appeals of this more virtuous place:-

Thus hauing past all perill, I was come
 Within the compasse of that Islands space;
 The which did seeme vnto my simple doome
 The onely pleasant and delightfull place,
 That euer troden was of footings trace.
 For all that nature by her mother wit
 Could frame in earth, and forme of substance base,
 Was there, and all that nature did omit,
 Art playing second natures part, supplied it.

(4.10.21.)

These temple gardens combine the formative generation of the natural Garden with the art of the Bower: but the blend is definitely one which accentuates nature. Art plays "second natures part." Thus, when Scudamour rejects the appeals of the temple gardens he is not assuming the virtuous posture of a knight like Guyon who:-

. . . suffred no delight
 To sincke into his sence, nor mind affect,

(2.12.53.)

but instead, he is rejecting a form of art which he could dearly use in his associations with Amoret: the art of friendship:-

All these and all that euer had bene tyde
 In bands of friendship, there did liue for euer,
 Whose liues although decay'd, yet loues decayed neuer.

. . .

Yet all those sights, and all that else I saw,
 Might not my steps withhold, but that forthright
 Vnto that purposd place I did me draw,
 Where as my loue was lodged day and night:

(4.10. 27,29.)

Scudamour's battle to enter the "island" paradise, his rejection of its appeals, his continuing quest for the love of Amoret, and his unceasing penetration of the temple garden, marks him as a

kind of Guyon confronting a kind of Bower. But, as we have seen, art is no longer presented in vicious excess. Instead, it plays the second part with nature. And thus, this garden and all of its delights, is real and genuine in terms of human nature in a way that neither the Bower nor Garden were. For here, Scudamour may be expected to partake of the pleasures offered him. He can, and does, achieve his natural ends by taking Amoret from out of the lap of Womanhood; but he fails to qualify his natural desires with the arts of friendship which can outlast pleasures of the mortal flesh. Art, in proper degree with nature, begins to offer spiritual transcendence because the spirit of God infuses intellect, knowledge, and art.

The Bower and Garden represent the two polar extremes of art and nature, and neither one offers a wholly satisfactory solution for man. When art refuses to serve nature, as in the Bower, sterility and delusion are the results. And although the Garden is admirable, yet man cannot discard his humanity in order to fulfil nature's decrees, upon a mindless level. Clearly, the only solution to the problem lies in the proper mixture of nature and art: and since man is so totally involved in this world, it is best that he should follow the lead of nature, using art to temper his disposition.

Spenser's solution is advanced in the episode of Venus' Temple where both nature and art come together in a realistic synthesis. It is realistic in terms of man because the blend of these polarities is such that man can virtuously partake of them both. If Verdant tries to return to Acrasia's embrace he will be reduced to the level of a beast because all art, without the benefit of nature, is degrading to man. Similarly, it is

impossible for Scudamour to enter the Garden of Adonis to claim his love because no man can totally involve himself in the processes of nature when his mind clearly sets him apart from these. But Scudamour could have claimed both art and nature in his penetration of the temple gardens.

The art-nature blend is, as we have seen, somewhat out of balance in Malecasta's house. Indeed, Malecasta is a symbol of the natural venerean element (which is described in the Garden) which has been perverted by art. And her house is analogous to the feminine body.¹³ It is clear that she has taken only Venus' lust as her model, and that Cupid's arts have helped her achieve her lustful ends. Thus, Castle Joyous symbolizes the potential degradation of the feminine body when the venerean element runs to excesses, and when these excesses are governed by Cupid's fleshly arts.

The venerean side of Malecasta is apparent from the tapestries, which emphasize Venus' lust, only, and from the "Lady of delight" herself; for she is obviously a false imitation of Venus. As a false Venus she is vaguely reminiscent of Acrasia. But there are further reminders of Acrasia in Castle Joyous simply because this castle has become degraded by art, and therefore, it reflects some of the sterility which is symbolized in Acrasia's Bower. If one were to compare Malecasta with Acrasia one would have to

13. Because Alma's parlor is comparable to the great chamber of Castle Joyous, as I have shown, it is arguable that Castle Joyous symbolized the "place" of the animal appetites. Malecasta's castle of delight must correspond to the fleshly part of Alma's two major frames.

admit that Acrasia is the larger figure, and the reason is that she represents all sensual pleasure while Malecasta symbolizes only sexual pleasure. The relationship is one of archetype to image.

CHAPTER 2: "The Garden of Adonis"

i

The sixth canto of book three relates two episodes of medullar importance: first is the "golden birth" of the twins Belphoebe and Amoret; the second is the Garden of Adonis. The Chrysogone episode unfolds the twin virtues of chastity and affection which are meant to come together in a synthesis of chaste love. This very synthesis is symbolized throughout the book by the virgin knight Britomart who wears the protective armor of chastity. We know from Britomart, herself, that chastity must be adopted as a protection and defence of the affectionate side of the feminine nature: hence the Diana element must take precedence over the Venus element in love until the proper "hermaphroditic" synthesis of masculine and feminine is brought into effect. Once man and wife are united in marriage:-

. . . the two shall become one flesh. It follows that they are no longer two individuals: they are one flesh. ¹

And within this union the feminine and masculine natures may excell in and through one another. But so long as the feminine nature remains apart from this union it must accentuate the defence of chastity or it will be like a turtle without a shell.

The feminine nature excells, however, through material, natural generation. This side of its nature can be symbolized by Venus, as it is in the Garden. But Venus, or the most natural force in the feminine nature, can be degraded as we have seen

1. New English Bible, Mark 10: 7-9.

from Castle Joyous. And since this is so, it is necessary to adopt some form of art to counteract the false arts of Cupid which threaten the unprotected venerean nature. Belpheobe is given the first place over Amoret because she represents this virtuous art. In book 4 we shall find that the masculine nature adds strength to the chaste element of the feminine nature, once marriage is contracted. Indeed, Spenser originally concluded his third book with the image of two lovers blending into one flesh as a symbol of the power of reunited human nature. In this union man embraces woman in the same way, philosophically, as the protective armor embraces the affectionate nature of Britomart. Or, by continuing the analogy, man adds the powers of strength, intellect, spiritual purpose, and protection which were provided by the Diana element in unmarried feminine nature. It is necessary to recognize that marriage represents a higher development of love from that which is symbolized in Britomart. When she discards her "armor" in exchange for marriage this will not represent a refutation of chastity, but a fulfilment toward which her chastity has led her. The proper relationship of Belpheobe and Amoret should lead to marriage:-

Lightly he clipt her twixt his armes twaine,
 And streightly did embrace her body bright,
 Her body, late the prison of sad paine,
 Now the sweete lodge of loue and deare delight:
 But she faire Lady ouercommen quight
 Of huge affection, did in pleasure melt,
 And in sweete rauishment poud out her spright:
 No word they spake, nor earthly thing they felt,
 But like two senceles stocks in long embracement dwelt.

Had ye them seene, ye would haue surely thought,
 That they had beene that faire Hermaphrodite,
 Which that rich Romane of white marble wrought,
 And in his costly Bath causd to bee site:
 So seemd those two, as growne together quite . . .

The blending of masculine and feminine is the major theme of book four. We shall treat this blending process, therefore, in later chapters.² For the present I shall argue that the Diana element should be given precedence over the Venus element in unmarried feminine nature, as both the Chrysogone episode and Britomart's example, suggest. But from this Chrysogone episode we are led directly into the Garden of Adonis where the venerean side of the feminine nature is isolated and described in its purest state. Nature, by itself, is not capable of uniting the body and mind of the feminine nature. Therefore, although the Garden may seem to represent a "life force" which can mediate between, and unite the opposites of body and mind (Castle Joyous and the House of Busyrane), we shall find that it simply does not have the power to do so. The Garden is an incomplete mean force, and the triad of episodes (Castle Joyous, Garden of Adonis, House of Busyrane) does not represent a viable reconstruction of Alma's House. Only Britomart can represent a total "mean" for the feminine nature, and it is her mediation between body and mind which eventually leads to the reconciliation of these opposites. Because Britomart symbolizes the synthesis of Venus and Diana, or the union of the twin virtues of the feminine nature as unfolded in the Chrysogone episode, she provides the genuine "mean" of this book. It is she who will unite the body and mind of the

2. The fourth book concludes with the Epithalamion of the Thames and Medway, and the reconciliation of Marinell and Florimell. The great marriage in the sea is almost inconceivably intricate, as Professor Fowler has shown in Numbers, pp. 182-191. Thus, it remains a vast symbol of the purposeful way in which masculine and feminine blend together.

feminine nature.

In the Chrysogone episode the two feminine virtues of chastity and affection are unfolded from our "golden birth." Belpheobe and Amoret represent the forces of Venus and Diana in feminine human nature. This important episode is balanced in book four, by the birth of the three loves and souls, (Priamond, Diamond, Triamond).³ For the impregnations of Agape and Chrysogone are obviously of the same type and were meant to contrast with one another.⁴

In the Chrysogone generation the sun "informs" the matter "fit" which is provided by his "faire sister," the moon:-

Miraculous may seeme to him, that reade
 So straunge ensample of conception;
 But reason teacheth that the fruitfull seades
 Of all things liuing, through impression
 Of the sunbeames in moyst complexion,
 Doe life conceiue and quickned are by kynd;
 So after Nilus invndation,
 Infinite shapes of creatures men do fynd,
 Informed in the mud, on which the Sunne hath shynd.

Great father he of generation
 Is rightly cald, th'author of life and light;
 And his faire sister for creation
 Ministreth matter fit, which tempred right
 With heate and humour, breedes the liuing wight.
 So sprong these twinnes in wombe of Chrysogone . . .

(3.6.8-9.)

The association of the moon with matter was traditional. Macrobius

3. See (4.2.41-54.).

4. Both stories occur as preludes to the most supremely important episodes of their respective books. In each case, the impregnation and births are obviously an "Orphic" unfolding of powers. Chrysogone unfolds her powers in the twins Belpheobe and Amoret; Agape unfolds her powers in the three brothers, Priamond, Diamond, and Triamond.

comments:-

Natural philosophers called the moon the ethereal earth and its inhabitants lunar people . . . There is no doubt that the moon is the builder and affords the increase of mortal bodies, so that some bodies, at the renewal of her light, experience an increase and diminish again when she wanes. 5

(131-2 Stahl)

Apparently, the Chrysogone generation is dominated by the "informing" sun, so that the material side of this blend of form and matter is second in degree to the "formal." Since the sun is a symbol of divinity it is perhaps arguable that Chrysogone's impregnation suggests an outpouring of God's love manifested in the creation of Belpheobe and Amoret. The predominance of the formal sun, in this generation, contrasts with the material excesses of Venus in her Garden, where the "formal" Adonis is entirely overshadowed.⁶

The Chrysogone episode also contains allusions to the Genesis through the imagery of light shining upon the water.⁷ It would seem likely that Belpheobe and Amoret are therefore two unfolded forces of God's love in feminine human nature. It is through the cultivation and synthesis of these "sisters", that the feminine nature is perfected. With chastity given the

5. Macrobius, Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, trans. William Harris Stahl, Records of Civilization, Sources and Studies, no. XLVIII (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), pp. 141-142.
6. Adonis' traditional association with the sun and, therefore, form as opposed to matter, is made explicit in: Macrobius, The Saturnalia, trans. Percival Vaughan Davies, Records of Civilization: Sources and Studies, no. LXXIX (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), pp. 141-142.
7. Robert Ellrodt noticed such allusions in the Garden of Adonis. See his study, Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser, pp. 70-90, esp.

first place in the genesis, the material excellence of feminine creativity will remain unimpaired. The heavens rejoice in the precedence of Belphoebe:-

But to this faire Belphoebe in her berth
 The heuens so fauourable were and free,
 Looking with myld aspect vpon the earth,
 In th'Horoscope of her natiuitee,
 That all the gifts of grace and chastitee
 On her they poured forth of plenteous horne;
Ioue laught on Venus from his soueraigne see,
 And Phoebus with faire beames did her adorne,
 And all the Graces rockt her cradle being borne.

. . .

Her mother was the faire Chrysogonee,
 The daughter of Amphisa, who by race
 A Faerie was, yborne of high degree,
 She bore Belphoebe, she bore in like case
 Faire Amoretta in the second place:
 These two were twinnes, and twixt them two did share
 The heritage of all celestially grace.

(3.6.2,4.)

But, from this story we are lead to the Garden of Adonis where Amoret is separated from her sister Belphoebe. The two maidens are destined, perhaps by the human condition itself, to grow and mature separately. Belphoebe learns the arts of chastity from Diana; Amoret learns the natural affection of love from Venus. Belphoebe's schooling is a discipline of the spirit; Amoret's is the fulfilment of feminine material creativity. Though separated both must come together, and unite their forces if a stable kind of love is to be formed in the feminine nature. In a sense, Belphoebe is the head, Amoret the body, in the feminine nature.

The Chrysogone episode points in two directions: through Belphebe we see the road to heaven, while Amoret represents an earthly involvement. It is this latter road which Spenser takes up in the Garden of Adonis. Hence it is that the Garden relates only Venus' side of the duality of Venus and Diana:-

Up they them tooke, each one a babe vptooke,
 And with them carried, to be fostered;
 Dame Phoebe to a Nymph her babe betooke,
 To be vpbrought in perfect Maydenhed,
 And of her selfe her name Belphebe red:
 But Venus hers thence farre away conuayd,
 To be vpbrought in goodly womanhed,
 And in her litle loues stead, which was strayd,
 Her Amoretta cald, to comfort her dismayd.

She brought her to her ioyous Paradize,
 Where most she wonnes, when she on earth does dwel.
 So faire a place, as Nature can deuize:
 Whether in Paphos, or Cytheron hill,
 Or it in Gnidus be, I wote not well;
 But well I wote by tryall, that this same
 All otherpleasant places doth excell,
 And called is by her lost louers name,
 The Gardin of Adonis, farre renound by fame.

(3.6.28-9.)

This is Venus' garden. It is a symbol of feminine material fecundity on both the universal and particular levels: this is the womb of the world where all of nature's creatures are created, and the "tiring-house" for each individual life. Our poet knows that this natural fecundity pertains to the earth and its creatures, but he confesses ignorance of its exact location. This is like saying that one knows that life is born from the womb, but one has no idea of just how the womb functions. We perceive the workings of nature - pure and unalloyed - within ourselves, but we recognize that these natural processes are beyond our ken.

The Garden, with its fruitful Genius, provides the generation which the poet prays for in quite another context:-

And thou great Mother, fruitful gentle land,
The bridale bowre and gemall bed remaine,
Without blemish or staine,
And the sweet pleasures of theyr loues delight
With secret ayde doest succour and supply,
Till they bring forth the fruitful progeny,
Send vs the timely fruit of this same night.

(Epith. ll. 393-404.)

The garden is a womb; and the Genius who guards the "bridale bowre" which, without "blemish or staine," secretly brings forth "fruitful progeny," is certainly the womb's guardian.

Obviously, such a view rejects any kind of a Neoplatonic schema. The Venus of this Garden is certainly a far cry from the "formal" image of "beauty's queen." She is the womb's "Great mother" who ministers "matter fit" for generation, and who functions similarly to Titan's "sister" in the Chrysogone generation. But the difference here is that it is her insatiable material lust which predominates, whereas the "formal" sun did so in the Chrysogone episode. But, most important, the garden cannot be meant to be symbolic of a Platonic world since no souls exist here as we shall see.

Venus' material role to Adonis' formal one, has been the subject of much debate. Even Robert Ellrodt claimed that the garden's "great mother" was associated with form, though his opinion on this matter caused him some difficulty. His insistence on Venus' formal character must, lamentably, come to nought since he is unable to argue that her formal role serves any purpose. Indeed, his argument is somewhat contradictory since he first says that Venus:-

. . . is too closely associated with form and the bestowing of form and beauty at the beginning of Canto (vi.12) for such an unprecedented allegory to be plausible . . . 8

In other words, the formal associations make it unlikely that she has any material ones. Yet, he is forced to admit that:-

Venus herself, in Spenser's relation of the myth, never once appears in her "heavenly" character, nor even as the bestower of form and beauty, but only in her mythological and erotic character. 9

Lewis finds his way out of the problem by recalling Ficino's distinction between the two Venuses:-

Clearly Spenser's Venus-on-earth resembles more closely the lower of these two Veneres, the Venus that Ficino identifies with the Anima mundi et omnes animae (that is, the vital principle in all animals and men - not in angels, who have no animae, but only mentes or intellects). Her function is to procreate; so that the appropriate abstract term for her might be Fertility or the Life-Force. 10

But although Lewis' approach makes more sense of Venus' function in the Garden than Ellrodt's, yet it leads him into the difficult position of claiming that Venus' role is really a formal one and that the "Father of all formes" (3.6.47.) Adonis, is really associated with Matter!

Both Lewis and Ellrodt fail to notice that Venus is far more adaptable to Spenser's context than their own theories are. It is not necessary to insist that Venus' association with form (evident in 3.6.12.) implies that she must be a formal

8. Ellrodt, Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser, p. 87.

9. Ellrodt, Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser, p. 83.

10. C.S. Lewis, Spenser's Image of Life, ed. Alastair Fowler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 51.

goddess when she is in her Garden. Surely Ellrodt misses the point that Venus has had to descend from her heavenly house and, therefore, undergo some elemental change when taking up an earthly residence:-

Him [Cupid] for to seeke, she left her heavenly hous,
 The house of goodly formes and faire aspects,
 Whence all the world deriues the glorious
 Features of beautie, and all shapes select,
 With which high God his workmanship hath deckt;

(3.6.12.)

Lewis understood that Venus' departure signified a change in her essential nature, but he limited himself to Ficinian Neoplatonism - which is of uncertain value to Spenser.¹¹ And by doing so he rejected an important tradition which interprets feminine with "matter" and masculine with "form." Considering that Spenser names Adonis the "Father of all formes," and that Venus is the "mother" of the womb-garden, it would seem that Lewis' interpretation is even less capable of dealing with the Garden than Ellrodt's.

Lewis has made a valuable contribution by associating Venus with the life force, but one does not need to approach this identification through the thickets of Neoplatonism. The traditional interpretation of the Venus-Adonis myth, which holds that these lovers imply a duality of form and matter, or sun and earth, furnishes a much better approach to the Garden episode.¹²

11. Ellrodt argues in his study of Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser that Spenser was influenced more by commonplace philosophy in his own time than to any specific philosopher like Ficino. See pp. 7-24 et seq.

12. See Macrobius, Saturnalia, trans. Davies, pp. 141-142; and Fowler, Numbers, pp. 132-144.

The Garden's Venus has left her heavenly house to become totally involved in the material world. To this extent she is virtually indistinguishable from her Garden. If she retains any part - even the merest trace - of form, it is so well hidden from view that it is virtually non-existent. Indeed, she herself is almost lost within the generative processes of the Garden. It is impossible to distinguish very clearly between the goddess who enjoys her Adonis, and the mount and arbor of the Garden itself. They are all one and the same - all a part of one another.

Venus, therefore, is involved in the material world which receives Adonis' formal seed. She is at once the world itself, and an individualized power of creativity within that world. But clearly, it is Adonis' formal seed which is required by the insatiably material Venus.

But in the end, Venus and Adonis are merely a man and woman who come together in an embrace which generates a material progeny. It was very much Spenser's purpose to place not simply the mount of Venus at the center of the third book, but the image of two lovers joined together in a fruitful embrace as well.¹³ In this sense, Venus simply represents the fruitful potential of the feminine nature - and this is very significant in terms of the traditional interpretation of Venus as the

13. Just as the fruitful Garden embraces the lovers Venus and Adonis, so the fruitful and purposeful marriage ceremony of the Thames and Medway embraces the union of Florimell and Marinell in the last two cantos of book four.

material earth and Adonis as the sun. To become too ingenious about this episode is to obscure the fact that Spenser is in the middle of a love debate involving masculine and feminine roles. And in the third book he discusses the feminine role. Rather than attempting to refute the traditional associations of matter and form with feminine and masculine, as Lewis does, it is better to accept the relevance of these associations in an episode treating the greatest material potential of the feminine, venerean nature.¹⁴

The Venus of the Garden is not the formal Urania, nor is she the formal power within the World Soul, nor is she merely erotic. She is the symbol, and archetype, of feminine material creativity; and she is so entirely involved in nature's processes that she is largely indistinguishable from her garden.

The Garden of Adonis is a powerful manifestation of dame Nature's beauty:-

In that same Gardin all the goodly flowres,
Wherewith dame Nature doth her beautifie,
And decks the girlands of her paramoures, are
fetcht . . .

(3.6.30.)

And further, the beauty of nature is described in terms of a

14. Associations of form and matter with masculine and feminine, respectively, turn up consistently in the philosophy of Western civilization. Vincent Foster Hopper shows in his study of Medieval Number Symbolism that such distinctions can be traced from the often primitive numerological thought of ancient times. See Hopper, pp. 3-11. It is also worth mentioning that the early Hebrew and Christian literature made and enforced sharp distinctions between male and female. There are no female priests in either religion because women are associated with matter rather than spirit.

"seed-bed" where all things are born to live and die:-

. . . there is the first seminarie
Of all things, that are borne to live and die,
According to their kindes. Long worke it were
Here to account the endlesse progenie
Of all the weedes, that bud and blossome there . . .

(3.6.30.)

Thus, the garden represents both the generative processes of nature and the beauty which springs directly from these. And since the garden contains an endless progeny, it would appear that we are being introduced to nature on a grand scale.

The Garden of Adonis is founded on "fruitfull soyle of old" and all created things within it:-

. . . yet remember well the mightie word,
Which first was spoken by th'almightie Lord¹⁵
That bad them to increase and multiply . . .

(3.6.34.)

These lines recall the Genesis; the Garden must represent a reformed Eden. It has come to terms with death and decay since the Fall of man from Grace. We notice in contrast with the Bower that the wholly natural Garden is capable of reconciling death and decay with fleshly eternity: at least some kind of transcendence is offered in the Garden. But in the Bower, where art endeavors to deceive and to entirely replace nature, there is no transcendence at all. Acrasia's victims are led to sterility through the mindless, unproductive embraces with a false Venus.

The Garden is then a reformed Eden which is used to illustrate nature's hidden mystery of creation. The entire world takes its first material being from this seminary:-

15. Ellrodt finds references to Genesis in this stanza. See Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser, p. 78.

Infinite shapes of creatures there are bred,
 And vncouth formes, which none yet euer knew,
 And euery sort is in a sunny bed
 Set by it selfe, and ready in comely row:
 Some fit for reasonable soules to view,
 Some made for beasts, some made for birds to weare,
 And all the fruitfull spawn of fishes hew
 In endlesse rancks along enraunged were,
 That seem'd the Ocean could not containe them there.

(3.6.35.)

The House of Alma was regarded as a wondrous machine, but here we see nature's machine which was set into motion at the moment of creation, and which still bears the fruit of the rationes seminales.¹⁶ Some of the "forms" - here Spenser uses this word loosely¹⁷ - are fit for reasonable souls; and some of them will be fit for the souls of beasts, birds and fish. But obviously they do not yet possess them. There is no mistaking the suggestion that the Garden is simply the place where the "forms" and shapes of all of nature's creatures are made, but that these forms and shapes do not possess souls as long as they are within this womb of nature. The Garden manages matter from the substance of Chaos, but it does not bestow, grow, or nourish souls; only God can bestow the soul to the living creature.

This is best understood if we recognize that, for Spenser, the Garden is distinguished from the actual world in precisely the same way as nature's processes are distinguishable from

16. Ellrodt was first to argue for Augustine's theory of the rationes seminales in the Garden of Adonis. Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser, pp. 70-90. Fowler agrees in Numbers, p. 138.

17. I.e., as a synonym for shape, feature, or creature.

nature's appearances. If we continue to imagine the Garden to be a womb we shall not go far wrong. The womb is a "garden" of fecundity and fruitfulness which provides material creation - after receiving formal masculine seed - in a wholly unfathomable way. The actual processes of the womb are unknown (to Spenser) except insofar as it is known that masculine formal seed is acted upon, or clothed with matter. The womb is both a part of this world, and yet apart from the world because its wholly natural processes place it beyond art, beyond moral judgment, beyond knowledge. The womb of the world, as the Garden is, would appear to be much the same. It would contain the potential of all things which have been, or ever shall be, created. It is indisputably a part of this world, and localized, but our poet cannot locate it exactly because it is also universal.

But whether we are discussing the individual potential, or the vast worldly potential for generation - microcosm or macrocosm - it is certain that we are speaking only of nature's material processes. The infusion of souls does not enter into it at all.

The stanzas on Genius have been described as the most difficult in the entire episode, and most surely they are because they seem to suggest the presence of souls in the Garden when, in fact, they point in quite another direction:-

It sited was in fruitfull soyle of old,
 And girt in with two walles on either side;
 The one of yron, the other of bright gold,
 That none might thorough breake, nor ouerstride:
 And double gates it had, which opened wide,
 By which both in and out men moten pas;
 Th'one faire and fresh, the other old and dride:
 Old Genius the porter of them was,
 Old Genius, the which a double nature has.

He letteth in, he letteth out to wend,
 All that to come into the world desire;
 A thousand thousand naked babes attend

About him day and night, which doe require,
 That he with fleshly weedes would them attire:
 Such as him list, such as eternall fate
 Ordained hath, he clothes with sinfull mire,
 And sendeth forth to liue in mortall state,
 Till they againe returne backe by the hinder gate.

(3.6.31-2.)

In the first place, Genius stands roughly between the Garden and the outside world. And all who pass by him must undergo some change. This is the most significant part of Spenser's distinction between nature's appearances and nature's hidden processes: through Genius, all those which are destined to go into the world leave the vast material matrix of nature and enter the world where they become known.

But what is Genius' function? If we decide that he bestowes the soul at birth, then we must account for an apparent metempsychosis since the souls would then return to him by the "hinder" gate. But why should Genius have anything to do with souls? He is, after all, a part of a Garden which we have found to be soul-less.

Besides, Spenser never mentions any souls in connection with Genius: all he says is that Genius clothes the babes with sinful mire. Presumably, the naked babes are created in the Garden in precisely the same way as the beasts, birds, and fish, so they possess only the potential for souls. But Genius does not actually supply the naked babes with the souls which they require. Instead, he clothes them with a sinful attire which has to do with divine ordinance. He clothes them, then, with mortality. The Garden is tinged with death and decay, and it cannot do otherwise than to pass this sentence on to man. Genius is simply the agent of this sentence. In a sense, Spenser demonstrates

how death and decay are incorporated into Eden, (and in the hidden processes of nature) and are then passed onto man.

The cyclical progress of the babes has nothing whatsoever to do with a metempsychosis of human souls. Since the Garden creates all of its creatures from the stable, unchanging, and unvariable substance from Chaos, it is necessary for that substance to return to the Garden to be reshaped.

Genius' double gates may have an anatomical significance, considering that the Garden is a womb, and that Genius' function is to send the babes into the world. But they may also reflect the great natural dichotomy of life and death - just as Genius' double nature may. On the traditional "garden of love" level, these gates might represent the pleasure and pain of love into which the creatures of nature are born. Or, in terms of Ellrodt's theory that the Garden represents the place of the rationes seminales, the double gates of gold and iron could symbolize the first and last ages which "enclose" these seeds.¹⁸ For the rationes seminales were created instantly - along with the creation of the world - and they will pass away on the presumed "eighth day" of creation when all created things will come to rest in God.

It is pretty certain that the "metempsychosis" which seems to be suggested by the endless cycle in which the babes are caught up, is worked out on a purely natural, physical, material level. What leaves from, and returns to, the Garden is not soul, but substance. And the Genius does not function as the bestower of

18. I.e., the ages of gold and iron.

soul, but only as the bestower of mortality. There may be another significance behind the assertion that Genius has a double nature, then, for his function in the Garden - though virtuous - does not resemble Genius' predicted function (2.12.47-8.). Perhaps the Garden's Genius fulfils only one part of the total nature of Genius, leaving the "celestial" functions to another figure entirely. Spenser's syncretic allegory is capable of harmonizing two unfolded powers of Genius, just as easily as Belpheobe and Amoret might have been brought closer together had the poem been finished.¹⁹

In the Bower we find a "false" Genius who contrasts with a "true" Genius of the Garden:-

They in that place him Genius did call:
Not that celestially powre, to whom the care
Of life, and generation of all
That liues, pertaines in charge particulare,
Who wondrous things concerning our welfare,
And straunge phantomes doth let vs oft forsee,
And oft of secret ill bids vs beware:
That is our Selfe, whom though we do not see,
Yet each doth in him selfe it well perceiue to bee.

(2.12.47.)

It is obvious that they contrast, but what is troublesome about the contrast is that the Garden's Genius is definitely not the "celestially powre" described here. Instead, he is a "god" of fertility, and Venus' servant, as Lewis suggests.²⁰ The point is that the Garden's Genius is a limited figure who may represent a part of the general force described in the Bower episode. Perhaps we find only one part of Genius' double nature in the

19. Belpheobe and Amoret are brought together in canto 7 of book 4 but this meeting is brief even though very significant.

20. C.S. Lewis, Spenser's Images of Life, p. 57.

Garden: the part concerning the "care of life, and generation of all/That lives."

I have suggested that Spenser distinguished between nature's appearances and its processes, and that this dividing line falls somewhere near Genius. And further, that the generation which takes place in the Garden - hidden within the secret womb of nature - involves no souls. Although Spenser could not claim to fully understand nature's hidden mysteries, he did make the attempt to describe them metaphorically. The vast machine of nature employs "first matter," or an eternal substance, and shapes it into various forms. This substance of nature is not to be confused with the spirit any more than Spenser's usage of the word "form" should be regarded as having a specific philosophical connotation when it is used loosely as a synonym for "shape," or "feature." Indeed, the substance of nature is at the opposite end of creation from the spirit, since it is derived from the spirit, since it is derived from Chaos:-

Daily they grow, and daily forth are sent
 Into the world, it to replenish more;
 Yet is the stocke not lessened, nor spent,
 But still remains in euerlasting store,
 As it at first created was of yore.
 For in the wide wombe of the world there lyes,
 In hatefull darkenesse and in deepe horrore,
 An huge eternall Chaos, which supplyes
 The substaunces of natures fruitfull progenyes.

(3.6.36.)

This substance is clothed with matter, in accordance with divine law. The matter must then be shaped in the Garden - therefore it would seem that Spenser has the concept of "pure potentiality" in mind with regard to matter at this point:-

All things from thence doe their first being fetch,
 And borrow matter, wherunto they are made,
 Which when as forme and feature it does fetch,
 Becomes a bodie, and forth with triueth
 The state of liuing, out of too shadely shade.
 That substance is sterne, and bideth so,
 No when the life decayes, and forme does fade,
 Doth it consume, and into nothing go,
 But chaunged is, and often altered to and fro.

(3.6.37.)

Since the poet has told us that the creatures do not possess a soul in the Garden, it is again likely that the word "form" is being used to mean shape or feature. If "form" were analogous to "soul," at this point, then we would have to countenance the thought of form fading (line seven above).

We note two processes: first the substance from Chaos acquires matter; then secondly, it catches form and feature, which prepares it for the world. The substance is eternal, but form and feature, as they relate to matter, are mutable. Hence, the Garden is built upon an eternal substance, but exists only through the mutable processes appropriate to matter:-

The substance is not chaunged, nor altered,
 But th'only forme and outward fashion;
 For euery substance is conditioned
 To change her hew, and sundry formes to don,
 Meet for her temper and complexion:
 For formes are variable and decay,
 By course of kind, and by occasion;

(3.6.38.)

Those who find the Garden to be a place of transcendent forms, as in a Neoplatonic world, must come to terms with the fact that these forms decay. On this basis, alone, the theory is faulty.²¹

21. See Bennett, *ELIA*, XLVII (1932), 46-80; and Stirling, *ELIA*, XLIX (1934), 501-538; and Bennett *JMP*, XLI (1941), 53-78.

The only eternity to be found in this garden is derived from the lowest substance of Chaos - not from the highest forms of heaven. The Garden stands the universe on its head - to misappropriate a metaphor - in the sense that it presents a view of the material world as obtaining its fulfilment through Chaos, since it employs the substance of Chaos. In this way Spenser balances the material side of nature against the spiritual by showing two kinds of "heavens" and two kinds of "grace." The material nature "sues" to Chaos to derive the eternal substance which provides the "grace" of eternity through mutability. But the spiritual nature moves in the opposite direction. Instead of deriving its grace from the deepest recesses of the material world, it "sues" upward to the true forms of heaven and obtains the grace of an eternity beyond time and decay. As M. S. Rostvig has noted, it was common to balance opposites against one another in regard to Christian prophetic doctrines: the time of creation in Paradise Lost is balanced against Satan's time of "uncreation," for example.²² Spenser has simply balanced the material side of nature against the spiritual - and associated these with the feminine and masculine natures, respectively. When he prayed to Genius in the Epithalamion he was praying to the guardian of the womb - that force associated with the material feminine nature.

Not much more need be cited to prove the natural character

22. Maren-Sofie Rostvig, see Chapter 2 of Silent Poetry, ed. Fowler, (London, 1970), pp. 32-72.

of the Garden. The next stanzas tell us what we already know: that death and decay trouble all of the creatures, and that they should be blissfully happy were it otherwise. The fruitfulness of the Garden is distilled into the image of the converging seasons of spring and autumn:-²³

There is continuall spring, and haruest there
 Continuall, both meeting at one time:
 For both the boughes doe laughing blossomes beare,
 And with fresh colours decke the wanton Prime,
 And eke attonce the heauy trees they clime,
 Which seeme to labour vnder their fruits lode:
 The whiles the ioyous birdes make their pastime
 Emongst the shadie leaues, their sweet abode,
 And their true loues without suspition tell abrode.

(3.6.42.)

And this vast fecundity is telescoped, or infolded, into the love of Venus and Adonis. Kent Heatt made the unnecessary calculation that the mount of Venus is at the center of book three (unnecessary because the episode is at the center of the book, structurally, and the Garden is a womb; therefore, it is obvious that the womb of both the Garden and of Venus - into whom the Garden is infolded - is at the center of the book.).²⁴ Insofar as this is true, it indicates the central importance

23. Fowler argues that the convergence of spring and autumn in the Garden proves that the "generative love creativity is continuous and uninterrupted." (Numbers, p. 138.) The Garden has resolved the necessity of seasonal death and resurgence, with love. In a sense it distills the harmony of the Venus-Adonis seasonal myth. Notice that the Garden is a perfect symbol of the entire world since the world, itself, maintains opposing seasons at any given time: when it is spring in the northern hemisphere it is autumn in a corresponding location in the southern hemisphere, for example. Spenser's image of converging seasons is therefore not a strained one. It is, on the contrary, very natural.

24. Bayhack, Delany, Heatt; see Chapter 5, Silent Poetry, pp. 141-152.

of the venerean material creativity in book three.

But although the Garden is a virtuous place, because it is wholly natural, it does not represent the ideal for human nature. Venus' overbearing relationship with Adonis becomes corrupt when it comes into contact with art, as it necessarily does in human nature. A more equitable balance of masculine and feminine is required in human love. As it is, Venus' material dominance provides material generation and material eternity through contact with some form - this time Spenser clearly implies a more philosophical connotation regarding the word "form":-

And sooth it seemes they say: for he may not
For euer die, and euer buried bee
In balefull night, where all things are forgot;
All be he subiect to mortalitie,
Yet is eterne in mutabilitie,
And by succession made perpetuall,
Transformed oft, and chaunged diuerslie:
For him the Father of all formes they call;
Therefore needs mote he liue, that liuing giues to all.

(3.6.47.)

By "forme" Spenser may still mean "shape" and "feature", but Adonis, as the "Father of all formes," possesses a formal creative power - like the sun in the Chrysogone episode.²⁵ Hence, the forms of the Garden telescope into Adonis, the Father, and Adonis becomes, therefore, an archetype of form. Considering the traditional associations of Adonis with the sun it is probable that the formal power he possesses is derived from heaven. Thus, although the Garden is a mixture of spiritual form (provided by Adonis) and the substance of matter (provided by Venus), Venus'

25. The traditional Venus-Adonis myth cannot be overlooked in connection with the "Father of all formes . . .". Spenser must be associating the solar Adonis with philosophical form: an appropriate attribute of the sun, as the Chrysogone episode proves.

material domination places the father of forms in an extremely passive role. It is apparent that form itself, has a very limited role to play in this garden. Adonis is used to provide seed, only. Spenser could not possibly imagine a "garden" of feminine material fecundity without the informing masculine seed, and to this extent he was obliged to provide it through Adonis. But it is quite clear that Adonis' role is not to infuse the Garden with soul or spirit. While it is true that masculine formal seed may have its associations with the spirit, the passive Adonis is used selectively by Venus; and it is not possible to see Adonis as more than the provider of masculine seed. If we wish to argue that Adonis is the representative of spiritual form we are obliged to recognize the fact that Venus' love totally subjugates him to her purposes.

In terms of the feminine nature, the Garden of Adonis represents the most natural kind of material generation appropriate to it. In contrast with the Chrysogone generation, where form and spirit dominate flesh and matter, we find the material Venus dominating form.²⁶ The result of this wholly natural commingling of matter and form is the fleshly eternity through mutability which the feminine nature has the power to provide. And it can provide this fleshly eternity (lineage) through pleasurable means: we recall that the account of the Garden both begins and concludes with references to pleasure.²⁷

26. Titan the sun prevails over matter: Belpheobe takes precedence over Amoret.

27. Enid Welsford argues that the word death, which concludes the second earthly Hymne, casts a shadow over both the Hymnes to earthly love and beauty. See Welsford, Spenser: Four Hymnes and Epithalamion, p. 48. In the same way the first and last words and images of the Garden episode are significant.

But this episode relates only one side of the story. The feminine nature also requires the defences of chastity (as we have seen from the Chrysogone generation) and a more equally balanced association with masculinity than was evident in the Garden. It is because the Garden lacks these qualities that it cannot reconcile the extremes of Castle Joyous and the House of Busyrane. We have seen very clearly how the pleasures of Venus' garden can be transformed into sterile lust, in the feminine Castle Joyous; now we shall see the mindlessness of the Garden contribute to Amoret's sufferings in the House of Busyrane.

CHAPTER THREE: "The House of Busyrane"

i

The eleventh and twelfth cantos of the third book of the Faerie Queene describes the House of Busyrane where Amoret suffers the torments of love. Whether or not her sufferings are brought on by adulterous love, distorted chastity or some other mental aberration resulting from love, jealousy, or masculine force, is still somewhat a matter of choice. Perhaps one can agree that the current opinion supports Roche's view that Amoret's captivity is a mental one.¹ Certainly Alastair Fowler accepts this supposition in his recent study, Triumphal Forms, although he is more explicit than Roche on the role of the enchanter within the house.² What is conspicuously missing from the theory that the three-celled House of Busyrane symbolizes a mental captivity, is the revelation that Alma's "turret" may be of some relevance here.

The purpose of this paper shall be to prove that the place of Amoret's captivity is analogous to the tripartite brain, as first described in Alma's house, and that Busyrane's first, second, and third rooms are analogous to the cells fantastick, rational, and memorial. Once the relevance of Alma's turret has been established, speculation on Busyrane's role becomes simply a matter of

1. Thomas P. Roche, *The Kindly Flame*, pp. 72-87, and note 42, p. 129.
2. Alastair Fowler, Triumphal Forms: Structural Patterns in Elizabethan Poetry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 47-58.

defining the Spenserian psychology.

From the beginning of the episode we are aware of a dualism: first, through the imagery of the flames surrounding the House of Busyrane. For these flames represent Amoret's fleshly passions which have been aroused by the same kind of Cupid who kindled the flames in Castle Joyous (3.1.39.). They lay siege to the house, but do not, themselves, intrude into its interior. It is arguable that they are meant to recall to mind the fleshly flames from Castle Joyous. Secondly, the dualism is amplified by Britomart's cryptic comment:-

What monstrous enmity prouoke we heare,
Foolhardy as th'Earthes children, the which made
Battell against the Gods. So we a God inuade.

(3.11.22.)

The dichotomy of the god-like House of Busyrane, and the fleshly flames which respond to Scudamour's "greedy will, and enuious desire," is already suggestive of a dualism of mind and body.

Britomart's journey into the recesses of the House of Busyrane is a mental penetration, and with each step she is led closer and closer to the ultimate form of the delusion which has usurped Amoret's mind. This penetration leads the virgin knight through the cells fantastik, rational, and memorial. We shall find, through a close comparison with Alma's "turret" that there are many similarities between the appropriate cells in the turret and House of Busyrane; and even the differences become highly symbolic in this context.

In the first section of this chapter we shall compare Alma's turret with the House of Busyrane; the next section will discuss Elizabethan and Spenserian psychology in general; and finally, we shall trace the delusion step by step - along with Britomart -

until it becomes possible to define the "enchanter."

In Alma's turret the first chamber:-

. . . was despainted all within,
 With sundry colours, in the which were writ
 Infinite shapes of things dispersed thin;
 Some such as in the world were neuer yit,
 Ne can deuized be of mortall wit;
 Some daily seene, knowen by their names,
 Such as in idle fantasies doe flit:
Infernall Hags, Centaurs, feendes, Hippodames,
Apes, Lions, Aegles, Owles, fooles, louers, children,
Dames.

(2.9.50.)

Interestingly enough, the walls of Alma's cell fantastick emphasize (by italics) some of the same "idle fantasies " which are found in Busyrane's "vtmost" room. In the tapestries of Busyrane's first room we find the eagles featured in Jove's metamorphoses:-

Twise was he seene in soaring Eagles shape,
 And with wide wings to beat the buxome ayre,
 Once, when he with Asterie did scape,
 Againe, when as the Troianeboy so faire
 He snacht from Ida hill, and with him bare . . .

(3.11.34.)

The hippodames, though not the metamorphoses of the gods, are here as well. Neptune is pictured in a chariot "Which foure great Hippodames did draw in temewise tyde" (3.11.40.) And finally, Saturn's metamorphosis provides the centaurs:-

Next Saturne was, (but who would euer weene,
 That sullein Saturne euer weend to loue?
 Yet loue is sullein, and Saturnlike seene,
 As he did for Erigone it proue,
 That to a Centaure did him selfe transmoue.

(3.11.43.)

It is appropriate that Saturn should provide a link between the first room of Busyrane's House and the cell fantastik of the turret, especially as Alma's first counsellor is associated with a saturnine melancholy:-

Emongst them all sate he, which wonned there,
 That hight Phantastes by his nature trew;
 A man of yeares yet fresh, as mote apere,
 Of swarth complexion, and of crabbed hew,
 That him full of melancholy did shew;
 Bent hollow beetle browes, sharpe staring eyes,
 That mad or foolish seemd: one by his vew
 Mote deeme him borne with ill disposed skyes,
 When oblique Saturne sate in the house of agonyes.

(2.9.52.)

This saturnine quality is depicted against:-

. . . idle thoughts and fantasies,
 Deuices, dreames, opinions vnsound,
 Shewes, visions, sooth-sayes, and prophesies;
 And all that fained is, as leasings tales and lies . . .

(2.9.51.)

in the turret of Alma's House. In the first chamber of Busyrane's House the faculty of the imagination is symbolized by tapestries which weave the imaginative stories of love's wars with a "sullein" snake-like stealth:-

For round about, the wals yclothed were
 With goodly arras of great maiesty,
 Wouen with gold and silke so close and nere,
 That the rich metal lurked priuily,
 As faining to be hid from enuious eye;
 Yet here, and there, and euery where vnwares
 It shewed it selfe, and shone vnwillingly;
 Like a discolourd Snake, whose hidden snares
 Through the greene gras his long bright burnisht
 backe declares.

(3.11.28.)

The second room of Busyrane's House is related to the cell rational by its clear emphasis on the things of this world. The eagles, hippodames, and centaurs have been replaced by:-

. . . mighty Conquerours and Captaines strong,
 Which were whilome captiued in their dayes
 To cruell loue, and wrought their owne decayes . . .

(3.11.52.)

These descriptions reflect no longer the fantasy and imagination of the previous room. They are clearly analogous to the descriptions

of the cell rational in Alma's House. The walls of this cell were:-

. . . painted faire with memorable gestes,
Of famous Wisards, and with picturals
Of Magistrates, of courts, of tribunals,
Of commen wealthes, of states, of pollicy,
Of lawes, of iudgements, and of descretals;
All artes, all science, all Philosophy,
And all that in the world was aye thought wittily.

(2.9.53.)

Again, love's domination has forced the thoughts of the cell rational to reflect the theme of love. In the first chamber we noticed that all of the fantasies and idle imaginings were forced into the subtle, snake-like tapestries where all served the theme of love. And here, we find the same emphasis and bias. But in spite of the delusion which we know to exist in Busyrane's House we are forcefully reminded of the inherent virtue of this goodly place; and this reminder applies to the second room - the room of reason - in particular. It was Britomart who first associated the House with a divine force ("so we a god inuade" 3.11.22.) and again it is she who mentions "the goodly ordinance of this rich place" (my italics 3.11.53.) and is amazed that it appears to be a "wastefull emptinesse." Certainly, we are reminded of the reactions of Guyon and Arthur as they discovered the cell rational of Alma's turret, for they were so taken with its goodly order that they wished to become the disciples of the counsellor of reason:-

Great pleasure had those stranger knights, to see
His goodly reason, and garue personage,
That his disciples both desir'd to bee;
But Alma thence them led to th'hindmost roome of three.

(2.9.54.)

The third room, of all the three, contains fewer similarities to its counterpart in Alma's turret; but this is hardly surprising considering that the delusion has, by the time we reach the cell memorial, reached its zenith. To this extent Britomart's journey

through the cells is the opposite of Arthur and Guyon's: for whereas they penetrated the depths of an orderly mind and moved steadily on toward virtuous order, Britomart moves toward disorder and delusion. And therefore, the closer she comes to the ultimate force of Busyrane, the more his mastery will deflect the most virtuous thoughts of the mind. We must expect that the third room, which houses the enchanter, will be less similar to Alma's virtuous cell memorial.

And yet even this cell contains reminders of the analogous cell from Alma's turret. Alma's cell memorial belonged to Eumnestes, the:-

. . . old man, halfe blind
And all decrepit in his feeble corse . . .

(2.9.55.)

who "things past could keepe in memoree" (2.9.49.). His chamber:-

seemed ruinous and old

(2.9.55.)

and was:-

. . . hangd about with rolles,
And old records from auncient times deriu'd,
Some made in books, some in long parchment scrolles,
That were all worme-eaten, and full of canker holes.

(2.9.57.)

Eumnestes was a man of "infinite remembrance":-

And things foregone through many ages held,
Which he recorded still, as they did pas,
Ne suffred them to perish through long eld,
As all things else, the which this world doth weld,
But laid them vp in his immortall scrine,
Where they for euer incorrupted dweld:
The warres he well remembered of king Nine,
Of old Assaracus, and Inachus diuine.

The yeares of Nestor nothing were to his,
Ne yet Mathusalem, though longest liu'd;
For he remembred both their infancies:

(2.9.56-7.)

But perhaps one thought which did not pass through, but which stayed

to usurp Eumnestes' place, was that of the ancient sacrificer Busyrane.³ Because Busyrane is a character from antiquity he may appropriately take his place along with "old Assaracus, and Inachus diuine" as well as Nestor and "Mathusalem." But because the mind broods on the sacrificial aspects of love, Busyrane has become an obsession and has therefore displaced the rightful counsellor and his assistant. Eumnestes' ancient books and scrolls are likewise replaced by Busyrane's books of magical spells. These are "wicked bookes" (3.12.32.) and "cursed leaues" which reveal "dreadfull things" (3.12.36.).

We have discovered certain important similarities between the three cells of Alma's turret and the three rooms of the House of Busyrane; furthermore, we have noted the dualism consisting of the god-like House and the besieging flames which respond to Scudamour's lust. The flames, themselves, recall the fleshly Castle Joyous, where we discovered tapestries analogous to those in Alma's Parlor. Surely Spenser is attempting to reconstruct Alma's house - not along virtuous lines, but instead in accordance with a warfare between body and mind. Castle Joyous is the body which rages with lustful fire, and which is symbolized in the flames which surround the House of Busyrane, the mind. In terms of Amoret's story, the House of Busyrane represents her mind which is thrown into confusion by the flames of lust. The lady Amoret is Venus' protege and as we have seen from the Garden, Venus is characterized as the wholly natural force inclined to sexual pleasures and mindlessness. The excessive lusts of the venerean nature are treated in Castle Joyous; the mindlessness if treated, appropriately, in the tripartite House of Busyrane. The reason that the mind is perverted by Busyrane is simply that Amoret has had no defences against his usurpation. We

3. Kathleen Williams, Spenser's Faerie Queene, pp. 109-110.

recall that the simple pleasures of sexual joy become perverted for much the same reason in Castle Joyous: the venerean nature requires chastity as a defence in love. Without this defence, the body and mind are easily degraded. It is significant that when Britomart drives out the evil obsession within the House of Busyrane, nothing replaces it. Amoret's venerean mind is blank, and Britomart laments because of it:-

Returning backe, those goodly roomes, which erst
 She saw so rich and royally arayd,
 Now vanisht vtterly, and cleane subuerst
 She found, and all their glory quite decayd,
 That sight of such a chaunge her much dismayd.

(3.12.42.)

Elizabethan psychology generally:-

. . . places memory next to imagination, which becomes its custodian; but Spenser will have all sensations given into the power of reason before they are turned over to Eumnestes.⁴

Thus, as Daniel C. Boughner noted in an article on Spenser's psychology, the construction of Alma's turret differs somewhat from the usual pattern. Nonetheless, the order of the cells from imagination, to reason, to memory was an acceptable enough doctrine in Spenser's own time. Boughner cited Batman's translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus' De Proprietatibus Rerum as evidence in support of Spenser's psychology. What the imagination:-

. . . shapeth and imagineth, she sendeth it to the judgment of reason. And what that reason taketh of the imagination, as a judge, iudgeth and defineth it sending to the memory.

PMLA, XLVII (1932), p. 93.

This process of rational thought is reflected in both the turret of Alma's House, and in the House of Busyrane. Busyrane's occupation of the mind may alter its thoughts, as reflected in the tapestries, statue, masque, and brazen pillar; but he cannot disturb the divine, goodly order of the mind. Rational thought continues unaltered in the House of Busyrane insofar as sensory perceptions are sent from the imagination to the reason, and thence into the memory. Of course, what has changed are the kinds of thoughts which undergo this process. Busyrane has caused the mind to brood on

4. Daniel Boughner, PMLA, XLVII (1932), p. 96.

cupidity. All of the idle fantasies of the cell fantastik reflect cupidity; all of the "captains and conquerors" of the cell rational reflect cupidity, not to mention the actual masque of Cupid; and even Busyrane himself reflects this theme, as I shall presently demonstrate. His usurpation of the mind has eliminated all other sensory perceptions which might fill the cell fantastik with the raw material of thought, except for those impressions which pertain to cupidity. And thus, the mind can only act on these particular impressions; as it does so it is inevitable that the cupidity of these impressions should be amplified along each stage of the thought process.

Busyrane's occupation of the cell memorial is appropriate for two reasons. First, in this position he is capable of blocking any recollection of rational thought which Amoret might have, and further, he may distort any recollection she may have and send it into the cell rational for her to brood upon.

But it is the actual process of rational thought, itself, which makes Busyrane's placement highly significant. According to Batman - and Spenser, as we deduce his psychology from the Alma episode - rational thought begins with sensory perceptions which are imagined in a multiplicity of shapes, images, thoughts, and patterns. The faculty of reason judges this raw material of thought, taking from it only what it requires. Thus, the cell rational acts upon the imagination by editing, synthesizing and distilling. It is, therefore, inevitable that the imagination should be flooded with a veritable chaos of images, while the cell rational should be composed of a "goodly" and moderate order of things derived from the imagination. After the imagination is edited, all of the relevant images are brought into a sharper focus. It seems fair to say that

since the images thus provided in the cell rational will have more meaning than those widely diverse imaginings from the previous cell - simply because of a sharper focus - they must be more powerful as well. It is perfectly evident that the masque of Cupid represents a more meaningful and more powerful stage of cupidity than that represented in the tapestries, for example. Nor does the fact that the masque issues from the cell memorial damage this theory. Recall that Amoret has been held for seven months, and during this time her mind has not been allowed to receive any new sensory impressions except perhaps, those which pertain directly to cupidity.⁵ In other words, for seven months she has brooded on the same recurring thoughts. Thus, it is essential that the masque issue from the cell of the memory where all rational thought is stored. That the masque is a recurring thought pattern issuing from the cell memorial does not contradict the assertion that it must have evolved from the cell fantastik at some specific time in the past: i.e., on Amoret's wedding night.

Thus, as I have already suggested, the thoughts of the cell rational are eventually sent into the cell memorial: and it is here that we find the "enchanter." From certain images, which we shall trace later, it is apparent that Busyrane represents yet another distillation of the major themes begun in the cell fantastik, and assimilated and condensed in the cell rational. For example, we shall note that when Britomart follows the masque into the third room she finds it vanished away, and in its place she finds the dark threats of the masque personified in the figure of the vile

5. See (4.1.3-4.).

enchanter. Spenser has literally infolded the masque into the dark magician.⁶

Busyrane's occupation of the cell memorial is appropriate, then, on the grounds that he represents the final stage of Amoret's delusion. He is the monster who captured the mind by governing its rational processes.

The advantage of recognizing Busyrane's place in the tripartite mind is simply that one can follow along with Britomart and actually define the "enchanter" by a simple culling of major themes as they evolve from the tapestries and masque. How else does Britomart, herself, come to terms with the enchanter except to learn his exact nature by reading the signs in the "House"?

Aside from the obvious attraction in being able to define, logically a figure of such perennial dispute, this theory has the advantage of discarding the widely held belief that Cupid and Busyrane are two different forces. They are distinguishable - indeed, Spenser distinguishes them for us - but they are not independent of one another. Busyrane represents the monstrosity of cupidity as Amoret imagines it. He is a higher development of the cupidity represented by Cupid in the cells fantastik and rational. But to say that Busyrane cannot represent lust because Cupid represents it, is clearly to make an improper judgment about the relationships between these figures. We should rather say that if Cupid represents the force of lust, then Busyrane must also be its personification; although an obviously more violent and dangerous one. By seeing

6. Here it might be more correct to say that Spenser follows the progress of rational thought rather than claiming that the "infolding" suggests the poet's use of Orphic rules.

Cupid and Busyrane in this light we may be more disposed to take Spenser's word on the matter:-

For that same vile Enchauntour Busyran,
The very selfe same day that she was wedded,
Amidst the bridale feast, whilest euery man
Surcharg'd with wine, were heedlesse and ill hedded,
All bent to mirth before the bride was bedded,
Brought in that mask of loue which late was shoven:
And there the Ladie ill of friends bestedded,
By way of sport, as oft in maskes is knowen,
Conueyed quite away to liuing wight vnknownen.

Seuen moneths he so her kept in bitter smart,
Because his sinfull lust she would not serue . . .

(4.1.3-4.)

There is one special case with which this theory, regarding the House of Busyrane's identification with the brain, must deal. The cell fantastik contains the cryptic statue of Cupid and the dragon which appears to represent a powerful synthesis of the themes in the stories of Love's wars. Obviously, this statue is the focal point, both visually and thematically, of the entire first chamber. And when we come to examine the statue we shall find that it represents all of the major themes of lust and cupidity expressed in the stories of love's wars. It is, in a sense, a "mean" between the two dimensional, lifeless pictures of love's wars, and the three dimensional, live masque. But what is its purpose?

Perhaps we can obtain a likely answer from Chaucer's Knight's Tale. Love's mastery caused Arcite great mental distress, and thus we come to this description:-

. . . Nat oonly like the loveris maladye
Of Heroes, but rather lyk manye,
Engendred of humour melencolik,
Beforen, in his celle fantastik.

(K.T. 1373-6.)

Here, Chaucer clearly places "mania" in the cell fantastik, and associates it with melancholy. We have noted that Phantastes, in

Alma's cell fantastik, betrayed a melancholy disposition through the influence of Saturn; and further, we found this saturnine influence reflected in the tapestries of Busyrane's utmost room. Perhaps the humour "melencolic" has begun to create the "mania" (which we find in Arcite) in Amoret's own mind. And if so, then what better way to suggest a lover's mania than through the image of the statue which makes the senses "reel," and to which many suppliants commit "fowle Idolatree" (3.11.49.)? Cupid's graven statue is the very image of mania.

There would seem to be a case for suggesting that the three rooms of Busyrane's house function fairly consistently like the three cells of the brain, and insofar as this is true we are able to understand Busyrane's placement in the house, and his associations with Cupid, better than before.

The reader is clearly being asked to follow along with Britomart throughout Amoret's infected mind. If we do so, stage by stage, we shall eventually encounter the ultimate synthesis of Amoret's thoughts. As I have suggested we may "read" the themes from each cell and look for their apotheosis in the cell memorial.

The whole thought process begins with the perception of an object, and in Amoret's case the object is Scudamour. To Amoret, this knight is indistinguishable from the shield of love which he bears - indeed, his very name implies this. But Amoret's inability to distinguish between the shield, which is the knight's "device" in love, and his natural self, suggests one reason for her delusion. Her obsession with the shield places her lover within a wholly "artful" context, when it is obvious that his youth, his natural passions, his desires for honor and rejection of the art of friendship betray too natural a disposition.⁷ If we compare Paridell with Scudamour we shall find that Paridell would best conform with Amoret's fears of art and artfulness. For Paridell's wooing of Hellenore was "So perfect in . . . art" that "Cupid selfe it seeing, close did smyle . . ." (3.10.5.). He is all art and little substance.

But Scudamour is precisely the opposite insofar as his youth and inexperience make him less able to handle the devices of art: he is all substance, but little art. Whereas Cupid aids Paridell

7. These qualities in Scudamour will be especially noted in a later chapter. They are evident in his courtship of Amoret (canto 10 book 4).

in person, he lends his support to Scudamour only through his shield; and perhaps, one senses that Scudamour is not the most adept champion of Cupid's art, and certainly not the most favored, like Paridell. His natural boldness carries him into the temple, but he hesitates out of fear of sacrilege (4.10.53. Can we imagine Paridell doing the same?) and thus shows how uneasily and ineptly he carries the shield of Cupid.

Scudamour's inept art of love causes him to make a serious mistake in his courtship of Amoret: he should have paused in the temple gardens long enough to learn the lessons of friendship and apply them to his love (4.10. 26-8.). This is the point at which he should have paused, not at the moment when he found Amoret seated in the lap of Womanhood. And thus, the cryptic motto of Busyrane's House: "Be bold, be bold, be not too bold" (3.11.54.) has some meaning in terms of Scudamour's courtship. Had he been less bold and more attentive to the arts of friendship, Amoret's fears might have been lessened.

But we are not concerned with these kinds of speculations; only with what actually takes place within Amoret's mind. When she first sees the shield of Cupid she is instinctively gripped with fear, and it is the fear of this shield which masters her mind. It symbolizes her "death" as a maid, and since her venerean mind does not perceive the good which comes from marriage, both spiritually and physically, she is left to brood on the arts which lead to death.⁸

8. As Venus' protege in the Garden of Adonis, one supposes Amoret would know of the pleasures which lead to fruitful increase. But, Amoret broods on the mortality, the death, which accompanies these pleasures. She has not learned of the spiritual nature of love.

Essentially, Britomart represents the force of chastity (accorded with pleasure) which enters into Amoret's perception and provides strength enough to defeat the enchanter. With Britomart comes the recognition of the purpose which underlies a maiden's sacrifice, and Britomart (or chastity) is quite capable of sustaining the wound that Amoret has feared so unnecessarily.

Thus, the captivity which Amoret endures is the result both of her misapprehensions, and her lover's ineptness. She is artless, herself, and her mind lacks the hardness of intellect, and the defence of chaste purpose. Therefore, she is vulnerable to the attacks of art, especially Cupid's. And when she sees the natural Scudamour she mistakenly believes that the shield he bears symbolizes his precise nature, when in fact he carries the shield uneasily. At this point, her mind becomes Cupid's bower. At some later time, during the wedding feast, the masque is played, and because of her fears of Scudamour's arts, and what she imagines that they portend, she instantly creates the monster Busyrane within her own mind. Busyrane has his origin in Scudamour, and as we begin to trace the major themes which are begun in the image of the lover and his shield, we shall easily find that they point directly toward Busyrane.

There are, for simplicity's sake, three major themes which develop throughout the House of Busyrane and which clearly evolve from the image of Scudamour and his shield and culminate in the image of the enchanter. First is the obsession with Cupid's arts, and these are obviously symbolized by the actual shield which Amoret takes to be too much a part of the lover. Secondly, there is the theme of sacrificial masculine power. This is derived from a composite of the lover and the shield. Scudamour's love involves

Amoret's sacrifice, but her fear of his arts has converted the natural image of the lover into the distorted image of a monster. And, finally, there is the theme of degradation and death which Amoret imagines to be the result of her surrender. All of these themes have some validity and reality in Scudamour, but the differences between Scudamour and Busyrane are too great; Amoret's interior vision of her lover has become a monster, unnecessarily. It is time for Britomart to say to Amoret (as Glauce had said to her):-

Daughter . . . what need ye be dismayd,
Or why make ye such Monster of your mind?

(3.2.40.)

Amoret's problem is summed up in the concluding lines of the above stanza, in a contrary sort of way. Britomart loved the reasonable image of Artegall, which was just:-

For who with reason can you aye reprove,
To loue the semblant pleasing most your mind . . .

(3.2.40.)

But Amoret cannot love the monster which she imagines her lover to be. Busyrane is not a "semblant" which pleases the mind.

The first suggestion of the danger which Amoret senses from art occurs in a stanza which reminds one, rather ominously, of the Bower of Bliss. We are warned of "hidden snares" in relation to a rich metal which weaves itself together with silk:-

For round about, the wals yclothed were
With goodly arras of great maiesty,
Wouen with gold and silke so close and nere,
That the rich metall lurked priuily,
As faining to be hid from enuious eye;
Yet here, and there, and euery where vnwares
It shewd it selfe, and shone vnwillingly;
Like a discolourd Snake, whose hidden snares
Through the greene gras his long bright burnisht
backe declares.

(3.11.28.)

We are reminded of the similarly lurking gold which was discovered, in the Bower, among a cluster of natural grapes:-

And them amongst, some were of burnisht gold,
So made by art, to beautifie the rest,
Which did themselues emongst the leavues enfold,
As lurking from vew of couetous guest . . .

(2.12.55.)

Some of the artificiality of the Bower must exist in these tapestries in the House of Busyrane where the snake-like gold weaves its way through the natural silk. The possibility that these tapestries reflect on some kind of artificiality in respect of Cupid's wars cannot be passed over lightly. This, of course, gives support to Lewis' claim that Cupid's context (in book 3) is generally that of amour courtoise.⁹ Certainly, when we encounter the masque in the second room we shall find a procession of characters very like any found in court of love poetry. The indication is that Amoret's fear of Scudamour takes the form of a fear of art; and this has been translated directly from Scudamour's shield into the images of Cupid's wars, fought according to his artful laws and precepts.

It is the image of the snake which is most telling for the tapestries weave their sullen stories with snake-like stealth; and we have seen that these stories symbolize Amoret's delusions. In the Bower we also encounter the image of the snake, and its relation to delusion and mindlessness:-

. . . like an Adder, lurking in the weeds,
His wandring thought in deepe desire does steepe.

(2.5.34.)

9. Courtly love is associated with the worst aspects of artifice and artificiality. See C.S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love, pp. 339-341.

The first chamber is filled with the images of Cupid's wars which have been woven with imaginative detail. The predominant theme of these tapestries is Cupid's invincible power in both heaven and earth. Here Amoret has confused Scudamour's masculine power with the arts of Cupid: the lover with the shield. But furthermore, these stories concern the metamorphoses of the gods into mostly animal or bestial forms, in response to Cupid's sovereignty. At one point Cupid thrusts himself into Jove's seat and proclaims himself the victor of the gods:-

Whiles thus on earth great Ioue these pageaunts playd,
The winged boy did thrust into his throne,
And scoffing, thus vnto his mother sayd,
Lo now the heauens obey to me alone,
And take me for their Ioue, whiles Ioue to earth is gone.

(3.11.35.)

What this reveals is the theme of degradation which is associated with Cupid's power. If the very gods forsake their places in heaven in order that they might become beasts in love, what does this say about Amoret's fears and about human nature except that she believes love to entail a willing sacrifice of mind and reason in order to revel in the delights of the flesh?¹⁰ In brief, the tapestries suggest the degradation of human nature, as well as of divine gods. And finally, this degradation leads, significantly, to death. We recall the deaths of Semelee and Daphne, and the most telling

10. This would seem to contradict the assertion of Amoret's mindlessness. How can she miss something she does not possess? But, recall that Britomart and the reader are meant to read the signs of her mind. By doing so we know far more about Amoret's emotional state than Amoret, herself.

line in these descriptions is:-

Yet was thy loue her death, and her death was thy smart.

(3.11.36.)

The tapestries, then, reflect each of the major themes. The sovereignty of Cupid represents the victory of his arts and the triumph of sacrificial masculine power. Furthermore, there is a consistent theme of degradation accompanying these arts. Finally, the results of Cupid's masculine, sacrificial arts point significantly toward death. These are the "thoughts" which will be acted upon by the faculty of reason.

The tapestries represent the faculty of imagination, but the statue of Cupid, in the same cell, represents mania. It is now only the focal point, visually, within the room, but it is the focus of all the previous themes in the tapestries, and this image is obviously powerful:-

And at the vpper end of that faire rowme,
There was an Altar built of pretious stone,
Of passing valew, and of great renowme,
On which there stood an Image all alone,
Of massy gold, which with his owne light shone;
And wings it had with sundry colours dight,
More sundry colours, then the proud Pauone
Beares in his boasted fan, or Iris bright,
When her discoloured bow she sprede through heauen bright.

Blindfold he was, and in his cruell fist
A mortall bow and arrowes keene did hold,
With which he shot at randon, when him list,
Some headed with sad lead, some with pure gold;
(Ah man beware, how thou those darts behold)
A wounded Dragon vnder him did ly,
Whose hideous tayle his left foot did enfold,
And with a shaft was shot through either eye,
That no man forth might draw, ne no man remedye.

And vnderneath his feet was written thus,
Vnto the Victor of the Gods this bee:
And all thepeople in that ample hous
Did to that image bow their humble knee,
And oft committed fowle Idolatree.
That wondrous sight faire Britomart amazed,

he has "blinded." It is easy to see why Cupid should make war on chastity, and that he might conquer the defender of chastity by blinding him; but it is not wholly clear why Cupid should be shown to be dependent on such a dragon. One admits that chastity is sometimes an aid to Cupid - it is sometimes said that Diana shoots Cupid's arrows - but this aid cannot account for the suggestion that the dragon represents a very substantial foundation of Cupid's power.

That the dragon represents a "power-base" for Cupid can be proven by recourse to the internal iconography of the poem, as well as through what we know of the mental processes which are being described in the episode. To take the last first, we would have to expect that the statue represents the themes we have been tracing. That would mean that the dragon would be best interpreted as the symbol of the degradation which Cupid's arts (and the sacrificial love of Scudamour) lead to. Cupid appears in his traditional pose, and he has been described as the victor of the gods. His effigy is, therefore, meant to be a summary of the themes of the tapestries where his arts, laws and precepts were actually shown to be victorious over the gods.

But what have we seen illustrated by these stories time and time again? Not so much Cupid's power over chastity, as his power over the gods. The importance of these stories lies in the theme of the willing degradation which the gods endure: specifically, the tapestries show the gods forsaking divinity in order to become beasts. If the golden Cupid represents a summary of his role in the tapestries then the dragon must also represent an appropriate summary of themes from these stories of love's wars. It must

symbolize the beast which the gods have become, and in which the gods find delight. Applying this to the human condition is easy. The dragon represents the animal appetities which are easily blinded by love. Man, like the gods, willingly forsakes his reason (which alone is god-like) to descend into the blinded fleshly, beastly passions. The dragon is blind because he receives no spiritual or rational "light."

The fleshly passions represent a more significant power base for Cupid than chastity. Chastity is what Cupid opposes; but he derives his power from the animal passions. Thus it is that the dragon may be conquered and blinded (because the flesh is blind) and yet coil his tail about his victor's leg to show that Cupid is very much attached to him. This view of the dragon carries out the major theme of degradation and descent - from reason to bestiality - which is stressed in the tapestries. Thus, Cupid's statue is a summary of all of the stories depicted in the fore part of the room.

But there is an internal iconography which can help us prove this assertion even better. Of all of the altars which are found throughout the Faerie Queene one never finds an animal or symbol, at the feet of a god or mortal without the suggestion of a mutual dependency. The snake coiled about Venus' feet in the temple of Venus (4.10.40.) symbolized the concord, eternity, and regeneration which Venus offers the world;¹³ the crocodile at Isis' feet (5.7.22.) represents the god Osiris; and finally, even the sword

13. See Macrobius, Saturnalia, trans. Davies, p. 137 for a similar interpretation.

at Mercilla's feet (5.9.30.) is a symbol of her terrible judgement. All of these examples demonstrate that Spenser's altars conform to a certain invariable pattern. The objects which lie at the feet of Venus, Isis, and Mercilla are, without exception, symbols of the power through which they function, and upon which they are founded. And in no case are these objects conquered or defeated, as we are led to believe that the dragon is.

Since Cupid's altar is obviously a genuine expression of his power, there is no reason to assume that it differs from the pattern we have just noted. The dragon does not symbolize chastity, but rather the fleshly appetites through which Cupid's power is made manifest. The dragon is not the wounded guardian of chastity which is offered as a gift to the victor of the gods; it is a symbol of the gods themselves - or rather, what they have willingly become - once they have forsaken their divine places. The lesson of the statue is expressive of the consequences of forsaking reason through Cupid's powerful assaults: it is, I believe, a lesson scarcely out of place in the House of Busyrane, and it is a summary of stanza (3.11.35.). Reason is the defeated thing here, and the cryptic motto suggests the gift which the victor of the gods receives: the dragon is a symbol, therefore, of the loss of reason.

The statue of Cupid demonstrates his involvement in the animal appetites, as well as his power to degrade the mind by metaphorically transforming the gods into beasts. But certain numerological arguments may also point in this direction, and I advance them here. One is always indebted to Alastair Fowler when numerology is discussed in relation to the Faerie Queene.¹⁴ Fowler

14. Fowler, Numbers, pp. 145-155.

has demonstrated, for example, that Cupid's central position in the tapestries and the masque depends, in both cases, on his being the seventeenth of thirty-three characters. Perhaps one might offer the following suggestions as well. Cupid's unlawful usurpation of Jove's seat in the tapestries is symbolic of his established power in the mind; and his association with the mind in this sense is reinforced by the fact that the number of gods mentioned in the tapestries totals nine. I have been arguing that Alma's House is of importance in the third book, and even that the House of Busyrane symbolizes Alma's turret. The number nine would remain significant in this episode, and would presumably retain its associations with the god-like mind.¹⁵

Secondly, if Cupid's powers have invaded the mind it is necessary still to demonstrate that these are fleshly powers. His association with the fleshly body is re-inforced by the fact that in both of the places where Fowler finds him to be a central figure, his centrality depends on his association with six other characters to make up a total of seven. Again, from the Alma episode, we find that seven represents the fleshly half of the dualism (2.9.22.).

If Cupid is a fleshly force then he is clearly associated with the five senses. It may be argued that in each place where he is part of a group of seven characters, one may readily divide the group into one group of five (Phoebus' five loves; the five attendants surrounding Amoret and Cupid) and another group of two. Cupid's power is associated, obviously, with the senses when Britomart's senses are dazed by the sight of his golden statue.

15. Note especially (2.9.22.).

Britomart's confrontation with the images of fleshly lust in the first chamber are not especially dangerous to her after her similar bout with Malecasta and, therefore, nothing prevents her from leaving the first room to enter the second. In the second chamber she encounters another modulation in the delusion of Amoret's mind. The themes of the tapestries and statue are contracted into the more vicious masque and, indeed, it is here that Amoret first appears.

The twelfth canto (which describes the second and third chambers) begins dramatically with a trumpet blast:

Tho when as chearelesse Night ycouered had
 Faire heauen with an vniversall cloud,
 That euery wight dismayd with darknesse sad,
 In silence and in sleepe themselues did shroud,
 She heard a shrilling Trompet sound aloud,
 Signe of nigh battell, or got victory;
 Noght therewith daunted was her courage proud,
 But rather stird to cruell enmity,
 Expecting euer, when some foe she might descry.

With that, an hideous storme of winde arose,
 With dreadfull thunder and lightning atwixt,
 And an earth-quake, as if it streight would lose,
 The worlds foundations from his centre fixt;
 A direfull stench of smoke and sulphure mixt
 Ensewed, whose noyance fild the fearefull sted,
 From the fourth houre of night vntill the sixt;
 Yet the bold Britonesse was nought ydred,
 Though much emmou'd, but stedfast still perseuered.

(3.12.1-2.)

The trumpet or horn is amply suited to the purpose of announcing the beginning of some activity: a hunt, battle, or siege. Aside from obvious Biblical antecedents, other poets have used the trumpet or horn to herald the commencement of some significant action, just as Spenser does here. Chaucer's Book of the Duchess begins the action of the dream with a horn blast: a precedent which may not have been far from Spenser's thoughts as he began to tell the

story of Amoret's dream.¹⁶

Perhaps, the horn may recall Maleger's siege of the five great bulwarks of the House of Alma (for Bussyrane's house is under siege by the flames representing the inflamed body). Certainly, the horn blast causes the same sort of "earthquake" as Britomart experiences when she hears the trumpet. We recall the episode from canto nine of book two:-

. . . the Squire gan nigher to approach;
And wind his horne vnder the castle wall,
That with the noise it shooke, as it would fall . . .

(2.9.11.)

And, of course, the smoke and sulphur which infuse the house must arise from the flames about the porch.

The earthquake which treatens to loose the world's foundations "from his centre fixt" may represent the power of fleshly passion to alter the divine order of the mind which, as we have seen, is analogous to a circle (2.9.22.). And we are certainly to recall the passage which occurs just twenty-five lines after the significant "monster of the mind" passage. For Britomart's love for Artegall shakes her, and Spenser makes the comparison with an earthquake:-

Which all that while she felt to pant and quake,
As it an Earth-quake were . . .

(3.2.42.)

It is fairly certain, in any case, that the experiences depicted within the second and third rooms of Bussyrane's House will involve the fleshly temptations which seek to degrade the mind, and these have a proven relation with Britomart who has suffered their attacks in Castle Joyous.

16. Chaucer, Book of the Duchess, Works, ed. Robinson, ll. 344 ff., p. 270.

The second room is made up both of goodly ordinance of things, and monstrous forms. Britomart's reaction reminds us that it is not the place itself which is evil, but the way in which it is kept:-

. . . she maruaild that no footings trace,
Nor wight appear'd, but wastefull emptinesse,
And solemne silence ouer all that place:
Straunge thing it seem'd, that none was to possesse
So rich pureyance, ne them keepe with carefulnesse.

(3.11.53.)

Instead of the images one might expect in a place of such "rich pureyance," one finds:-

A thousand monstrous formes . . .
Such as false loue doth oft vpon him weare,
For loue in thousand monstrous formes doth oft appeare.

(3.11.51.)

But it is the actual masque of Cupid which advances the themes of the previous chamber. For Cupid's presence is of central importance in the masque, proving his domination of it;¹⁷ it also involves masculine, sacrificial lust; and finally, it portrays a ladder stretching from Ease to Death, thus illustrating a descent and degradation involved in Cupid's mastery. Masterful Cupidity, sacrificial masculine lust, and a degradation leading to death: these are the major themes which were begun in the tapestries, solidified in the statue of Cupid and the dragon, and which are now brought painfully to life in the masque of the cell rational. And there is no mistaking the fact that these themes are growing more and more powerful as we penetrate deeper into Amoret's mind. Indeed, the trumpet balst, earthquake, wind-storm, smoke and

17. Fowler, Numbers, pp. 149-151.

sulphur which begin the episode clearly indicate the immediacy of this vision to Amoret as she suffers from its "tyranny."

Appropriately, the masque begins with a reference to Castle Joyous where Cupid stirred the fires of the body. There is a sensually appealing kind of music in the masque which is reminiscent of Malecasta's lascivious Lydian mode:-

. . . a most delititious harmony,
In full strange notes was sweetly heard to sound
That the rare sweetnesse of the melody
The feeble senses wholly did confound,
And the fraile soul in deepe delight nigh dround.

(3.12.6.)

The masque is arranged into three main groups symbolizing the three stages of Cupid's love - and perhaps making a subtle reference to the actual construction of the tripartite House of Busyrane itself. Amoret imagines she has "descended" through the first group of Ease and the six couples of Fancy and Desire, Doubt and Danger, Fear and Hope, Dissemblance and Suspect, Grief and Fury, Displeasure and "Pleasance." These personifications are meant to symbolize the stages through which Amoret imagines she must pass up until her surrender to Cupid (and to masculine lust which would sacrifice her virginity).

In the second, and central group, we find Amoret dragged between Despite and Cruelty; in this position she is just ahead of the victorious and triumphing Cupid. Behind Cupid are the three women named Reproch, Shame and Repentance.

The third group is made up of a "rude confused rout" and consists of Strife, Anger, Care, "Unthrifthead," Loss of Time, Forrow, Change, Disloyalty, "Riotise," Dread, Infirmities, Poverty and Death.

Amoret, as we notice, is held a captive in the second group -

just as the masque occurs in the second chamber of the House. It might very well appear that she has succumbed to Cupid, whose precisely central position symbolizes the imagined "dividing line" of actual submission. For, as Fowler has proven in Triumphal Forms, the general in a triumph marches his captives just before him.¹⁸ Cupid is therefore glorying in his triumph over the captive Amoret. He even removes his blind-fold in order to see Amoret and rejoice in "his cruell mind." (3.12.22.) But it is not Amoret's captivity which we are disputing, for it is obvious that this began the moment she succumbed to the very first personification in the "ladder." What is more interesting is the possibility of Amoret's actual submission to sacrificial lust, and it would be far more logical to argue that the fear of this submission is the cause of the lady's sufferings. In short, she has not yet forsaken her virtue though she fears that she will be forced to, and that such submission will send her past Cupid, and further down the ladder to Death.¹⁹

The mere fact that Amoret is shown to suffer at the hands of this vicious Cupid in the masque, is enough to prove that the delusion is greater in the second room than it was in the first. We have seen Cupid develop from the woven image, to the graven image, and finally to the live Cupid of the masque; but we have yet to encounter the most distilled and contracted image of Cupid plus all of the themes we have noted thus far.

That this infolding continues as we enter the third room, is

18. Fowler, Triumphal Forms, pp. 23-33.

19. Therefore the marriage has not been consummated.

evident from Britomart's attitude as she is about to confront the enchanter:-

Then when the second watch was almost past,
That brasen dore flew open, and in went
Bold Britomart, as she had late forecast,
Neither of idle shewes, nor of false charmes aghast.

(3.12.29.)

The only way Britomart could judge that the enchanter is composed of little more than idle shows and false charms, is to have read carefully the signs of the mind and to have connected them with the enchanter himself. Since she realizes that the enchanter cannot be anything more than an amplification of the themes which she has observed all along - themes which she knows to be false (3.11.51.) - she can enter into the third room without fear. Just as the enchanter enforces his mastery over Amoret by subjugating the rational processes of the mind to his purposes, so Britomart can overcome the usurper of reason by depending on the same rational processes.

As soon as Britomart enters the room we are explicitly told that all the persons in the masque, which preceded her, have vanished; and that in their place stands the dark enchanter and the lady. The masque has been infolded into Busyrane. All of the major themes which have evolved throughout the House are present in Busyrane: he threatens Amoret with a knife - the more dangerous distillation of Cupid's darts; he employs magical spells which recall Cupid's arts; he represents sacrificial masculine power, as Cupid had throughout; and his lust leads to Amoret's degradation and to death. The most certain indication that the masque has been infolded into Busyrane is the fact that it vanishes once it has entered into the third room, leaving only the "enchanter" and the maiden Amoret.

So soone as she was entred, round about
 She cast her eies, to see what was become
 Of all those persons, which she saw without:
 But lo, they streight were vanisht all and some,
 Ne liuing wight she saw in all that roome,
 Saue that same woefull Ladie, both whose hands
 Were bounden fast, that did her ill become,
 And her small wast girt round with yron bands,
 Vnto a brasen pillour, by the which she stands.

And her before the vile Enchaunter sate,
 Figuring straunge characters of his art,
 With liuing bloud he those characters wrate,
 Dreadfully drooping from her dying hart,
 Seeming transfixed with a cruell dart,
 And all perforce to make her him to loue.
 Ah who can loue the worker of her smart?
 A thousand charmes he formerly did proue;
 Yet thousand charmes could not her stedfast heart remoue.

(3.12.30-31.)

Britomart knows that the enchanter is a false and idle image of the lover, Scudamour, because she has seen the lover and has traced Amoret's perceptions throughout the three cells of the brain.²⁰ Scudamour possesses the shield of Cupid, and therefore uses the laws of Cupid to gain his love. This accounts for the first theme of Cupidity which Amoret imagines. Next, his love involves her physical surrender and sacrifice. This accounts for the consistent obsession with degrading wounds. And finally, the love Amoret imagines leads to death because not only is her loss of virginity a kind of death (as a maid), but the lover's rejection of the higher love of friendship, and her lack of chaste knowledge, keeps the relationship upon a fleshly, and mortal level. All of the themes which infuse Amoret's mind are present, more or less, in the lover. But obviously, Amoret has made too much of her fears and has

20. Fowler, Triumphal Forms, pp. 54-57. Fowler comes right to the point of seeing that he has described Britomart's journey as a progress through rational thought.

created a monstrous image of Scudamour. Busyrane is Amoret's mistaken image of the nature of Scudamour. And we have surely noted that this image is overly concerned with cupidity. It can only be that Amoret has mistaken Scudamour's shield - which he uses uneasily - for his nature, and thus does not perceive the most important aspect of this knight: his desire for honor.

Since Amoret's delusion is therefore not entirely false, but rather only amplified beyond all reason, we shall find that Britomart will not kill the enchanter. Instead she will step between Busyrane and Amoret just as she stood as a mean between Scudamour and Amoret when she entered the House. The "mean" role of chastity is even mentioned by Britomart:-

But Britomart vprearing her from ground,
Said, Gentle Dame, reward enough I weene
For many labours more, then I haue found,
This, that in safety now I haue you seene,
And meane of your deliuerance haue beene . . .
(My italics)

(3.12.40.)

Britomart, as the champion of chastity, can absorb the wound which Busyrane (and Scudamour) threatens. The "wound" is real enough, and made with the same cruel knife which Amoret has feared, but its real consequences are slight as long as Britomart's chastity is allowed to absorb it. It is, after all, the defensive strength of chastity which Amoret's venerean mind has lacked for so long:-

Soone as that virgin knight he saw in place,
His wicked bookes in hast he ouerthrew,
Not caring his long labours to deface,
And fiercely ronning to that Lady trew,
A murtherous knife out of his pocket drew,
The which he thought, for villeinous despight,
In her tormented bodie to embrew:
But the stout Damzell to him leaping light,
His cursed hand withheld, and maistered his might.

From her, to whom his fury first he ment,
The wicked weapon rashly he did wrest,
And turning to her selfe his fell intent,

Vnwares it strooke into her snowie chest,
 That little drops empurpled her faire brest.
 Exceeding wroth therewith the virgin grew,
 Albe the wound were nothing deepe imprest,
 And fiercely forth her mortall blade she drew,
 To giue him the reward for such vile outrage dew.

(3.12.32-3.)

Britomart's role in the House of Busyrane is to restore the balance of the mind by placing her chaste strength between the lover and the maiden: this she does actually, when she enters the House, and metaphorically, when she takes the wound meant for Amoret. In the composite figure of Britomart, who represents the harmony of Venus and Diana, we recognize the fullest potential of the feminine nature. It is Britomart who possesses not only the venerean capability of fleshly generation, but the proper amount of purpose and intellect which avoids the fleshly degradation of Castle Joyous, and the mental imbalance of the House of Busyrane. It is Britomart, the Knight of Chastity, who unites these extremes, of the feminine nature, which are the excess and defect of the Garden's "mean."

Britomart's confrontation with the vile enchanter concludes her quest by demonstrating the power of chastity to act as a "mean" not simply between Amoret and her lover, but between the two extreme episodes in the third book. Indeed, she acts as a "mean" force between the body and mind of the feminine nature.

The House of Busyrane episode has often been a troublesome one. Busyrane can be clearly defined once one follows the signs within the House in the way that Britomart does: for, if we are aware that the House represents the tripartite mind, then the signs must conform with the order to rational thought. Busyrane must, therefore, represent a synthesis of the themes begun in the cell fantastik and brought to life in the cell rational. If we find that Amoret's obsession

involves cupidity, then Busyrane must also represent cupidity.

And since the mind has had only the shield of Cupid (and the ardent lover) besieging it with lust, it is also clear that the vile form of Busyrane must have originated with Scudamour and his shield.

When attempting to evaluate or criticize any part of the Faerie Queene it is never amiss to keep the Bible well in mind. As Renwick said, the Bible was Spenser's major source, notwithstanding references to other philosophies.²¹ It is perhaps illustrative of this point to recall that Robert Ellrodt discovered references to the Genesis, and in particular, to the Augustinian rationes seminales within a garden which many, at the time of his writing, thought to represent a more or less complete Neoplatonic world of forms.²² In so doing he proved what should not have needed proof; that the Bible was the foundation of this episode and that all other allusions to pagan philosophy were merely commonplace "aesthetic" conceptions.

Even so, we are tempted to lose sight of the Bible when we read of the sacrificial Busyrane whose masculine lust torments Amoret, and of the rife cupidity which characterizes the entire House of Busyrane. One is justified in discarding Biblical iconography - as Lewis does for the dragon of Cupid's statue - when the Bible seems less applicable to this episode than Ovid's Art of Love.²³

But there is an extremely important Biblical foundation for the events of this troubling episode. We must take the hint from

21. W.L. Renwick, Edmund Spenser, pp. 161-162.

22. Ellrodt, Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser, pp. 70-90.

23. C.S. Lewis, Spenser's Images of Life, pp. 21-24.

the following lines:-

For that same vile Enchauntour Busyran,
The very selfe same day that she was wedded,
Amidst the bridale feast, whilest euery man
Surcharg'd with wine, were heedlesse and ill hedded,
All bent to mirth before the bride was bedded,
Brought in that mask of loue . . .

(4.1.3.)

The masque occurs on the wedding day, "before the bride was bedded;" at just this time the enchanter steals in to carry the maiden away. Anyone familiar with the Bible would think immediately of the model pair of wedded lovers, Tobias and Sarah. Even the briefest of examinations will uncover a remarkable number of correspondences between the Tobias and Sarah story, and the Busyrane episode.

But first, it would be well to demonstrate the widespread popularity of the apocryphal book of Tobit, in order to show that Spenser would certainly have known of it. The book of Tobit remains one of the most widely read books of pious fiction, to the extent of its being one of the all-time most popular books of Jewish literature.²⁴ In it the writer describes many facets of Jewish life in exile.

Primarily, the story of Tobias and Sarah comes down to us through the marriage ceremony - and this story is the most popular story from the book of Tobit. As early as 1085 the marriage ceremony in England mentioned Tobias and Sarah as a model pair. The priest's blessing of the marriage bed was generally phrased in this way:-

24. Bruce M. Metzger, An Introduction to the Apocrypha (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), pp. 31-41.

. . . keep thy servants who rest in this bed from
all phantoms and apparitions of demons . . . 25

Bruce M. Metzger notes that this reference to "demons" recalls the demon Asmodeus from the story of Tobias and Sarah.²⁶

The story was not forgotten during the Reformation. Martin Luther believed it to be:-

. . . a truly beautiful, wholesome, and profitable
fiction, the work of a gifted poet . . . A book
useful and good for us Christians to read.

(Preface 1534)²⁷

And finally, one excerpt from the marriage service ceremony from the book of Common Prayer, 1549, should prove that the story was as popular as ever fifteen years after Luther's commendation of it:-

. . . As thou diddest sende thy Aungell Raphaell
to Thobie, and Sara, the daughter of Raguel, to
their great comfort: so vouchsafe to sende thy
blessinge upon these thy servantes. 28

The Book of Tobit was considered a profitable book, written by a gifted poet; and the story of Tobias and Sarah came to be regarded as a model story in respect to marriage. And it had a particular bearing on the "marriage bed" as we shall see. Its popularity was such that it was alluded to in the Book of Common Prayer and it is virtually inconceivable that Spenser should not have thought of it as he wrote his episode which told of Amoret's distresses on her wedding day, shortly before "the bride was bedded."

25. Metzger, p. 40.

26. Metzger, p. 40.

27. Metzger, p. 37.

28. Metzger, p. 40.

The story itself can be told very briefly. Tobit sends his son Tobias to Media in order to collect ten talents of silver which are "on deposit" there, and God sends the angel Raphael to accompany him on the journey. On the way, Tobias bathes in the river Tigris. A huge fish leaps out of the water and tries to swallow his foot, and Raphael cries out to Tobias, telling him to "Seize the fish and hold it fast." (Tobit 6:4) Tobias extracts the "gall, heart, and liver" from the fish:-

'You can use the heart and liver as a fumigation for any man or woman attacked by a demon or evil spirit; the attack will cease, and it will give no further trouble.'

(Tobit 6:7-8.)

Presently, Raphael tells Tobias of the woman, Sarah. And Tobias answers:-

. . . my friend, I have heard that she has already been given to seven husbands and they died on the very night they went into the bridal chamber to her. I have been told that it is a demon who kills them ... he does her no harm, but kills any man who tries to come near her.

(Tobit 6: 13-14.)

Raphael comforts Tobias by saying:-

When you enter the bridal chamber, take some of the fish's liver and its heart, and put them on the smoking incense. The smell will spread, and when the demon smells it he will make off and never be seen near her any more. When you are about to go to bed with her, both of you must first stand up and pray, beseeching the Lord of heaven to grant you mercy and deliverance. Have no fear; she was destined for you before the world was made. You shall rescue her and she shall go with you. No doubt you will have children by her and they will be very dear to you.

(Tobit:6: 16-17.)²⁹

29. Spenser's doctrine of kindred souls has Biblical support here: ". . . she was destined for you before the world was made"

When the wedding night arrives, Tobias does as he is told and the demon, Asmodeus, is exorcised:-

The smell from the fish held the demon off, and he took flight into Upper Egypt; and Raphael instantly followed him there and bound him hand and foot.

(Tobit 8:3.)

Having thus expelled the demon, Tobias and Sarah pray, and Tobias concludes thusly:-

I now take this my beloved wife, not out of lust but in true marriage.

(Tobit 8:7.)

In both the Busyrane episode and the story of Tobias and Sarah we find that a maiden is held captive by a "demon . . . who has fallen in love with her."³⁰ In each case the maiden's distresses occur on the wedding night; each time they are associated with lust (for Asmodeus is a demon of lust, and Busyrane lusts after Amoret);³¹ in each case this lust is destructive (to Sarah's husbands; to Amoret herself); and there is a numerical correspondence in the seven month captivity of Amoret, and the seven husbands of Sarah. In the Tobias story the angel Raphael saves the lovers through good counsel, and especially by capturing - but not killing - the demon. Busyrane, of course, suffers the same fate at the hands of Britomart. And there is even the possible relationship between Asmodeus and Busyrane

30. Metzger, p. 33.

31. "Asmodeus is a form of the Parsee Eshem-der and the Zend Aeshmadaeva. According to the Avesta he was the demon of lust. He was one of the most dangerous of demons." See L.H. Brockington, A Critical Introduction to the Apocrypha (London: Gerald Duckworth, 1961), p. 36, n.1.

on the basis of their Egyptian associations. Asmodeus flees to "Upper Egypt;" Busyrane is the name of the ancient Egyptian tyrant recorded in Ovid's Art of Love.³²

That Spenser should have recalled the story is easily proven by noting its popularity. That he should have enjoyed it as literature is attested to by Luther and, again, by its popularity. That it should have occurred to him to imitate it in an episode involving a maiden's distresses on her wedding night, especially when these distresses involve a demon of lust, should be sufficiently within the realm of probability.

The Biblical foundation of the Busyrane episode is an aid to interpretation. For one thing, we can no longer consider that the context of the story is wholly derived from a court of love tradition. There is a simple lesson in the episode which the Biblical source makes us recognize, and it may be summed up by Spenser's own words from the Hymne to Love:-

But man, that breathes a more immortall mynd,
Not for lusts sake, but for eternitie,
Seekes to enlarge his lasting progenie.

(103-5.)

Scudamour has acted in the opposite manner from Tobias, for he has attempted to take Amoret for the sake of lust - or so Amoret is led to believe by his youthful exuberance. Spenser's lesson in this episode is, then, very simple. Marriage involves a higher love.

32. Ovid, The Art of Love, and Other Poems, trans. J.H. Mozley, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1929), Artis Amatoriae, I, ll. 649 ff., p. 56.

CHAPTER FOUR: "minor episodes"

The general discussion of the third book has tended to involve only the major episodes from the first, sixth, eleventh and twelfth cantos. Naturally, this has left much unsaid. The reason I have approached the book in this way is that I believe that one's understanding of this part of "lovers deare debate" is conditional upon recognizing the tripartite structure which dominates the book. To know, for example, that the three major episodes depict an excess, mean, and defect of the feminine nature; and that they further illustrate the polarity of body and mind in improper - or at least incomplete - balance, is to obtain a kind of knowledge which greatly outweighs the possible benefits from following the story of this book chronologically (if that were possible), or even from one canto to the next.

Fortunately, I have found that the Florimell story accounts for most of the minor episodes, and that it is important enough by itself to warrant a rather full treatment. Thus, in the next chapter I shall treat Florimell's story from both books three and four in an attempt to demonstrate the actual "marriage" of these books.

After treating the Florimell story we are left with three "minor " episodes: Britomart's love-sickness, and consequent journey to Merlin who reveals her noble progeny; the Malbecco-Hellenore story; and the beginning of the Timias-Belphebe story.

I tend to agree with Pauline Parker that the first episode

is principally magical and romantic; and that it is an example of the "narrative" poet's art:

. . . it is better to leave it its own enchanted atmosphere of magic and romance; a Malory king and castle, with a lovely daughter and a magic mirror, like that of Virgil in the Gesta Romanorum, in which is seen Artegall wearing the armour of Achilles. Then follows the visit to the white magician's cave; but this, like Glauce's charm, is not Malory, but sheer folklore. Merlin's prophetic visions here form a parallel to the chronicles read in book two which they continue. Certainly a compliment to Queen Elizabeth I was being worked in, and Spenser was establishing a claim to be the Virgil of England, with the Tudor sovereign for his Augustus (Mritomart's descendants are traced as far as "a royall virgin's raine"). Nevertheless, this second and third canto, culminating in the romantic departure to seek the reality of the vision which she has seen, as Arthur saw Gloriana, or Angus the swan-maiden, must chiefly stand as an example of Spenser's art simply as a narrative poet.

(pp. 163-4.)

Here, perhaps we can let the matter rest. Whatever possible bearings this episode has on my general view of this book are noted at different times throughout the paper, and especially, as we have seen, when we endeavor to define the "monster of the mind" in cantos eleven and twelve.

The two remaining "minor" episodes are far more interesting from my point of view, since both are central to the love debate. The Malbecco-Hellenore story is non-continuous (that is to say, that it does not carry on into any later book); the Timias-Belpheobe episode is, on the other hand, one of the stories to continue into book four. On the face of it one would be tempted to argue the importance of the Timias story in book three over the Malbecco story. But this would be wrong. The Timias-Belpheobe story is obviously a historical, as well as moral allegory and, at times, the historical level is so evident as to overshadow the other level, or levels, of allegory. Further, in book three

we have only the beginning of a story: and an eventually incomplete story, at that. No doubt Spenser hoped to complete the story with the marriage of Timias and Belpheobe, but that was not to be. Perhaps he had made the historical level so obvious that historical events prevented him from completing the episode.

On the other hand, the Malbecco-Hellenore episode does not continue into the succeeding book, it is a complete story within itself, it avoids a restricting use of historical allegory, and the moral level of allegory goes directly to the heart of the matter: mastery in love. The Malbecco-Hellenore episode is one of the most significant minor episodes in the whole of the Faerie Queene.

In summary, the episode involves the story of an old man who hoards his young wife, Hellenore, with a miser's greed. Because of the unnatural situation in which he has placed Hellenore and himself, he finds he is eventually cuckolded by the fair-speaking knight, Paridell. The results of the shattered marriage are that Malbecco loses his wife and his gold, and becomes metamorphosed into the archetypal figure of jealousy, while Hellenore descends to the level of a beast through inordinate lust. The description of Malbecco's flight to the sea is as fine a description as one can find in the poem:-

High ouer hills and ouer dales he fled,
 As if the wind him on winges had borne,
 Ne banck nor bush could stay him, when he sped
 His nimble feet, as treading still on thorne:
 Griefe, and despight, and gealosie, and scorne
 Did all the way him follow hard behind,
 And he himselfe himselfe loath'd so forlorne,
 So shamefully forlorne of womankind;
 That as a Snake, still lurked in his wounded mind.

Still fled he forward, looking backward still,
 Ne stayd his flight, nor fearefull agony,
 Till that he came unto a rockie hill,
 Ouer the sea, suspended dreadfully,
 That liuing creature it would terrify,
 To looke adowne, or vpward to the hight:
 From thence he threw himselfe dispiteously,
 All desperate of his fore-damned spright,
 That seem'd no helpe for him left in liuing sight.

But through long anguish, and self-murdring thought
 He was so wasted and forpined quight,
 That all his substance was consum'd to nought,
 And nothing left, but like an aery Spright,
 That on the rockes he fell so flit and light,
 That he thereby receiu'd no hurt at all,
 But chaunced on a craggy cliff to light;
 Whence he with crooked clawes so long did crall,
 That at the last he found a caue with entrance small.

(3.10.55-7.)¹

Indeed, one might notice that Florimell's "chase" bears a certain relationship to Malbecco's "flight" in the matter of description. Florimell flees forward, while continually looking back just as Malbecco does. But while Malbecco flees to the sea, Florimell's chase, in the first canto of book three, is away from the sea.² Spenser may have meant to construct a counter-balance to Florimell's innocent chase through the example of Malbecco's degrading fall.

There may be a slight anticipation of the next episode describing the monster of the mind, when we read of the "Snake" which lurks in Malbecco's "wonded mind." As we have seen, there is a lurking snake in the House of Busyrane. And, one might suspect that the ominous references to snakes in this passage,

1. The snake is associated with the mind once again. Also, compare (2.5.34; 3.11.1-2; and 3.11.28.).
2. Florimell's chase must be away from the sea at this point for several reasons which will be made clear in chapter 5. One proof of this assertion is found in (3.7.18.) where we are told that in order to leave the Witch's cabin and head to the sea the Palfrey is forced to retrace his steps.

and in the "House", would preclude any possibility of the snake being a symbol of virtue, or regeneration. The snake which lurks in the mind of Malbecco, along with the lurking snake in the tapestries of the cell fantastik, is an evil one.

Thus, even in the descriptive matters of this tale we may extract some meat, and argue a curious relationship with certain important episodes in the third book. The story, itself, bears an obvious similarity to the "Merchant's Tale" in the Canterbury Tales, but it may also be compared with the "Miller's Tale." Certainly, Spenser might easily have found a tradition for the old man hoarding a young wife. Tithones and Aurora are mythical examples. And Frye has argued that the relationship between Busyrane and Amoret is not unrelated to this tradition.³

But the tradition need not detain us as long as we have Spenser's explicit comments on the episode:-

O hatefull hellish Snake, what furie furst
Brought thee from balefull house of Proserpine,
Where in her bosome she thee long had nurst,
And fostred vp with bitter milke of time,
Fowle Gealosie, that turnest loue diuine
To ioylesse dread, and mak'st the louing hart
With hatefull thoughts to languish and to pine,
And feed it selfe with selfe-consuming smart?
Of all the passions in the mind thou vilest art.

O let him far be banished away,
And in his stead let Loue for euer dwell,
Sweet Loue, that doth his golden wings embay
In blessed Nectar, and pure Pleasures well,
Vntroubled of vile feare, or bitter fell.
And ye faire Ladies, that your kingdomes make
In th'harts of men, them gouerne wisely well,

3. Northrop Frye, "The Structure of Imagery in the Faerie Queene," cited from: Edmund Spenser: A Critical Anthology, ed. Paul J. Alpers (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1969), p. 287.

And of faire Britomart ensample take,
That was as trew in loue, as Turtle to her make.

(3.11.1-2.)

Jealousy is the hellish snake which has infused Malbecco's mind and destroyed love. But the first cause of this jealousy is mastery. Spenser's agreement with Chaucer that mastery in love is a great danger to marriage has prompted him to demonstrate how mastery - which he compares with a miser's greed - can infuse the masculine nature with jealousy, and degrade the feminine nature with lust. In a sense, both Malbecco and Hellenore are victims of mastery. For Malbecco's "light" is restricted by his half-blindness, thus suggesting that the spiritual light, which exists in nature, is lost to him. He compares with January who loses his sight for the same reasons. Such blindness to the spirit, and to this world, leads inevitably to jealousy. Jealousy leads, in turn, to lust. Like May in the "Merchant's Tale," Hellenore is bound to find the attractions of lust overpowering in such a situation. And thus, the little house of Malbecco falls, just as Troy fell through a mismanagement of love. Spenser had learned a good dramatic point from the "Merchant's Tale" which shadowed the fall of Eden in the fall of the improper lovers, January and May.

One need not continue the discussion of this episode. The major theme is the danger of mastery in love which produces jealousy and lust, and which can wreck individuals and commonwealths. As such it is an episode of absolutely central importance to the love debate.

There is, perhaps, one final note which might be added. Because this episode immediately precedes the story of Amoret, and because Amoret's sufferings are caused by a masterful lover,

it is inevitable that we should look closely at the actions of Scudamour with Malbecco in mind. When we discuss the Temple of Venus episode in the tenth canto of book four we shall find that the Malbecco episode has some bearing on Scudamour. For the present, we shall note only that Malbecco is a warning to all masterful lovers who are inclined to consider their ladies as property to be rightfully possessed: as Scudamour does.

The Timias-Belpheobe story seems to lead toward the marriage of honor with chastity. Timias had received a wound from the lustful Foster who had attempted to capture Florimell. Though the wound was severe, Belpheobe was able to cure it. Nonetheless, Timias soon found that although he was cured of this wound, he had sustained another:

O foolish Physick, and vnfruitfull paine,
That heales vp one and makes another wound:
She his hurt thigh to him recur'd againe,
But hurt his hart, the which before was sound,
Through an vnwary dart, which did rebound
From her faire eyes and gracious countenance.

(3.5.42.)

Timias is despairing because there is an obvious gap between Belpheobe and himself: he, though honorable, is only a squire; Belpheobe is almost a goddess. Yet, surely the moral of this story - had it been completed - would have been that love functions virtuously such inequities can be resolved. Love is an ennobling experience, and Timias may yet be elevated by it. Indeed, one statement made in the episode concerns the problem of their unequal stations in life, and resolves it:-

. . . of all loue taketh equall vew:
And doth not highest God vouchsafe to take
The loue and seruice of the basest crew?

(3.5.47.)

Hierarchy or not, Spenser is providing for the marriage of
Timias and Belphoebe.

CHAPTER 5 : Seasonal cycles

i

A tradition concerning books three and four of the Faerie Queene is passing away: the tradition that these books are lacking unity and structure to the extent that they are the least interesting of all the six completed books. Professor Daiches, in his Critical History of English Literature, agrees that the complexities of these books are an asset rather than a liability to the enjoyment of the poem:-

What is required here is for the reader to surrender himself to the story; if he does this he will find the picture of the varieties of true love in man and nature opposed to love's perversion building itself up cumulatively as the adventures and descriptions unfold. The two books are rich in set descriptive pieces which teem with moral and psychological suggestions.¹

Indeed, the "complex suggestiveness"² which Daiches claims for these books is often enough to prompt one into suggesting that the reader allow himself the luxury of not inquiring too deeply into the particulars of the story. Any kind of detailed analysis of these books (particularly the kind which deals with order and structure) inevitably uncovers a number of frustrating inconsistencies.³ Yet, in spite of these it is possible to argue for a principle of order and structure which in its "main lines"⁴ is disarmingly simple, and even obvious.

1. David Daiches, A Critical History of English Literature, 2nd ed., 4 vols. (London: Secker & Warburg, 1969), I, 191.

2. Daiches, I, 191.

3. The classic response to these inconsistencies was given a new lease of life in a modern critic's interpretation of the Garden of Adonis. See Alastair Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964), p. 136: "Perhaps the difficulty (in interpreting the Garden of Adonis with consistency) . . . arises from this: that Spenser himself has declined to follow any particular application of the (Venus-Adonis) myth consecutively throughout the cante"

4. See Alastair Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time, pp. 63-64, (hereafter to be cited as "Numbers"): " . . . while the poem's numerical organization is almost unimaginably intricate, nevertheless its main lines can be easily grasped."

It is therefore my contention that the structure and order of these books is fairly simple to understand in general, though somewhat intricate in its particulars.

Let us make, first of all, two distinctions with regard to books three and four: 1) the two books comprise one unit, and should be thought of as two equal parts of the same book; 2) Neither of the titular knights afford us a clear picture of the structural order of these books through the progress of their quests. The first distinction implies that whatever is chosen to illustrate the unity of books three and four must be a major part of both books; the second distinction suggests that one should choose something other than the stories of Britomart and Triamond in this regard. There are four stories which one might seriously consider: the love stories of Britomart, Belphebe, Amoret, and Florimelli; and of these four, only Florimell's story can be shown to unify these books in any kind of structural way.

Once the story is examined it becomes apparent that Florimell's cycle forms the structure about which the two books revolve, for it begins in the first canto of book three and reaches its denouement in the final canto of book four. And this, one should emphasize, corresponds with all the previous conditions of structural unity based on the progress of one knight throughout the cycle of his quest. No one objects to Rederosse, or Guyon, as principles of unity within their own books, even though both knights overlap into succeeding books in order to complete their cycles. The mere fact that one is introduced to a knight in the first canto, and is able to trace his progress across the total spectrum of a book, is virtually enough to satisfy most requirements regarding the provision of unity and structure for that particular book. Therefore,

Florimell's story which begins on the "hemisphere" of the land, and concludes in the "hemisphere" of the sea (a journey which begins the action of book three and concludes the action of book four), must be seen to satisfy all the requirements necessary to structural unity and order. No matter that her's is a so-called "minor" story, for she embodies one part of Britomart, just as Amoret and Belpheobe are other "parts" of the Briton maid. Indeed, all of the four major stories, concerning the four above-mentioned heroines, contribute to Spenser's two-part love debate, in which Britomart is the central character and the other ladies are but detached essences of herself.⁵ The subject of love is divided into the two major divisions of love and friendship, book three and book four, and all the characters are related to this grand scheme. Thus, Spenser's statement at (3. 5. 1.) may be taken as characteristic of his general intent:-

Wonder it is to see, in diuerse minds,
 How diuersly loue doth his pageants play,
 And shewes his powre in variable kinds:
 The baser wit, whose idle thoughts alway
 Are wont to cleaue vnto the lowly clay,
 It stirreth vp to sensuall desire,
 And in lewd slouth to wast his carelesse day:
 But in braue sprite it kindles goodly fire,
 That to all high desert and honour doth aspire.

All of the diversities of love go into constructing "louers deare debate" (4. proem. 1.). But it is Florimell's story, of all the rest, which delineates the shortest, clearest, and most complete cucle of love in books three and four: though, it must be admitted that in spite of this, it is the most intricate of stories.

Florimell's story is viable on several levels of allegory: political, literal, moral, psychological, philosophical, and seasonal. I shall concentrate on those which seem to me to hold the most interest

5. Of course, these ladies have an external reality as well since they represent diversity in love: Belpheobe is related to Diana and Gloriana as well as to Britomart. See: (3. proem. 5; and 3.6. 1-28.)

for a structural interpretation of these two books, and therefore, the seasonal allegory will be treated at length in an attempt to show how, structurally, it embraces most of the other levels of allegory. Let us briefly review the kinds of allegories it is possible to discuss in respect to Florimell. Morally, Florimell represents the soul questing for a clearer understanding of itself by confronting and mastering the bodily passions, and undergoing a period of captivity within the bounds of the mind in order to learn how to effect a balance between body and mind. Philosophically, Florimell carries the significance of the feminine nature, while her lover Marinell represents the masculine nature with which she must unite.⁶ On the literal level of allegory, Florimell is simply a woman suffering from the effects of a tyrannous love which attempts to subject mind and body to its will. Her concern is to bring pleasure within the virtuous context of marriage rather than submit to the forces of lust. Like Amoret:-

. . . her honor dearer than her life,
 She sought to saue, as thing reseru'd from stealth;
 Die had she leuer with Enchaunters knife,
 Then to be false in loue, profest a virgine wife.
 (4.1.6.)

Naturally, as with Amoret, Florimell's trial will suggest certain psychological implications especially concerned with the warfare of body and mind which love has caused. Finally, the seasonal allegory will appear to be of great importance to Florimell's story since it will place Florimell within the frame of a seasonal context

6. The subjects of books three and four (i.e., love and friendship) are associated with two other categories: feminine and masculine. Love, in book three, is decidedly feminine in nature, bound up in the passions and desires of the body, and generally associated with sexual love and the consequent seasonal generation of life; friendship is a far more spiritual emotion, and is masculine in character. Friendship tends not toward seasonal generation, since it is not sexual and strictly material, but instead, toward eternal, spiritual generation. And therefore, on at least one level, the relationship between these books can only be expressed as a love relationship of feminine for masculine. Florimell's story will be seen to illustrate the love and marriage of these books.

which is agreeable to her meaning on the other allegorical levels, and will clearly convey a structural order to all of the various allegories associated with the Florimell story. In other words, it is useful to regard Florimell as a part of a seasonal order because: 1) if she represents the soul questing for awareness of itself then her awareness of material (bodily) and formal (mental) realms must indeed be predicated upon the inescapable reality of seasonal mutability since this is the condition of mortal state. The soul, if one regards Florimell as that, may indeed be immortal and beyond change, but the body within which it is placed is seasonal. Thus, it is appropriate to regard Florimell's context as a seasonal one on this level. 2)

In like manner one could argue that Florimell's most obvious allegorical level is seasonal, for if she represents the ideal beauty of women, or even the ideal beauty of all of nature, which I think is likely, then, again, she must be placed within the seasonal context. Florimell may seem eternal and untouched by change, yet this is consistent with a universal or ideal form; indeed, nature is eternally beautiful, but only because God's love, having descended into corruption, provides the world with eternity through change. Therefore Florimell may cross the spectrum of books three and four, from the stable land to the material chaos of the sea, and yet remain beautiful. She, as the ideal form of worldly, natural, or womanly beauty, always remains ideal; but her utter need of contact with the chaos of the sea is itself a powerful symbol of the relationship between the unchanging ideal and the ever-changing world of particulars upon which it depends. 3)

If we regard Florimell as a symbol of the feminine nature, again, the seasonal context is fitting; for in book three the feminine nature is

explored with great emphasis in the episode of the Garden of Adonis, and the conclusion which we must draw from that exploration is that the feminine nature is associated with nature, and with physical and worldly generation, which provides for humanity an eternity through mutability. 4) Finally, on the literal level one may easily see how a woman passes through seasonal stages from innocence to maturity, and therefore, reflects the macrocosmic seasons by her own seasonal development in response to nature, and love. ⁷

Thus, on practically any level of allegory one cares to name, Florimell benefits by her association with a seasonal context. In addition to the propriety of containing the story within a seasonal frame, there is another benefit to be gained. The seasonal frame makes its own kind of structural unity for the Florimell story in the sense that as one detects the change from one "season" to another, one also appreciates certain stages within each of the levels of allegory. As an example: if Florimell's quest passes through the four seasons, and is therefore contained within four definite seasonal stages, then on the literal level of a girl's progress from innocence to maturity in response to love, we may deduce four seasonal stages in her development which are, to a certain extent, indistinguishable from the progress of the "love" itself. This leads us to the conclusion that love's and nature's cycles are analogous, and, therefore, we are confronted with a deduction of some importance: for just as nature has its "highs" and "lows", at the summer and winter solstices, so love has its corresponding cycle. By demonstrating that Florimell passes through certain seasonal stages, Spenser merely binds microcosm and macrocosm.

Of the kinds of allegory which I have mentioned, the seasonal is at once the easiest to perceive in its main lines, and yet the most

7. The relationship between the false and true Florimells will be discussed later.

difficult in its particulars. Before taking up the details of this theory it might, perhaps, be advisable to discuss the cycle in general, and to provide some authority for assuming that there is a clearly defined seasonal allegory, as well as anticipating and resolving some of the most tenacious difficulties and objections which such a theory entails.

A. C. Hamilton suggested the seasonal context for Florimell in his book The Structure of Allegory in the Faerie Queene, although he never worked his theory out in detail:-

. . . Since the cycle of the seasons may begin anew, the flight of Florimell immediately follows. Upon the cosmological level of Spenser's allegory, her flight signifies the natural natural cycle of the seasons.⁸

And Alastair Fowler seemed to agree with the seasonal interpretation to some limited extent, although he made it clear that he believed the "primary meaning of Florimell's (story) to be political and philosophical."⁹

Yet, it is through Fowler that we may begin to appreciate the seasonal allegory, for he has afforded us with proof that the third book begins in the season of spring since the very first canto of this book includes a stanza which describes the time of the vernal equinox.¹⁰ Although this event is associated with Britomart it has relevance to Florimell and indeed, the relationship between Britomart and Florimell, which I shall discuss later, would argue the plausibility of referring this moment in time to both quests.¹¹

9. Fowler, Numbers, p. 139, n. 2.

10. Fowler, Numbers, pp. 145 - 146.

11. The vernal equinox is said to occur during Britomart's night in Castle Joyous, which in terms of short time, is the same day as Florimell was first seen to dart across faerie land. Later I shall prove that Florimell's cycle from innocence to married love is parallel in many respects to Britomart's, and that it is poetically just to associate the two cycles by a common starting point, i.e., the spring of the year. Thus Britomart's and Florimell's own "spring-time" of innocence coincides with the macrocosmic spring.

Fowler's observation on the occurrence of the vernal equinox is as follows:-

If the astrological pattern of book III is examined in the light of the foregoing discussion some theories previously advanced find additional support. Most obvious, perhaps, is the chronographia at 3.i.57. describing the state of the heavens at the moment when the company at the House of Malecasta retire for the night . . . The information conveyed in these lines enables us to fix the date of the event as the vernal equinox.¹²

But if it is not immediately obvious to all readers that book three begins more or less at the precise moment of the vernal equinox, it is, conversely, difficult to miss the suggestion that the fourth book concludes with the season of winter, shortly before the return of spring. We notice the descriptions of Florimell's dark and sterile captivity within "wintry" Proteus' dungeon in the depths of the sea, and this, in connection with the rebirth of Florimell and the seasonal images of reborn vegetation at (4.12.33-35.) makes it very difficult, indeed to avoid the suggestion of some kind of seasonal allegory. Thus, if Fowler is right, it would seem that books three and four are meant to suggest not only a philosophical and moral whole, but one complete (or virtually complete) unit of time, being the period of one year.¹³ Florimell passes from the beginning of book three to the end of book four, from spring to winter, within the space of four separate stages, and these seem to correspond with the stages of a seasonal cycle from spring to

12. Fowler, Numbers, p. 145

13. Fowler, Numbers, pp. 163-164; and especially, pp. 169-170.

winter delineated by symbolic representations of equinoctial and solstitial points.¹⁴

The four stages of the Florimell cycle may be proven to be analogous to equinoctial or solstitial periods in one of two ways: either by direct statement, or as is more common, by the symbolic imagery appropriate to such natural phenomena. Thus, one knows that the vernal equinox coincides with the first sight of Florimell because Spenser tells us that it occurs on the same day that Florimell made her appearance in faerie land. Perhaps we also sense the vitality and power of the scene which depicts Florimell's emergence from the wood of passion, and perhaps we associate this vitality with vegetable growth, or the exuberance of spring. Should we make these connections we would undoubtedly find support from Spenser's astrological information in Castle Joyous; but the point to make here is that the imagery appropriate to the equinoctial period is not very pronounced at this time, though it is not entirely lacking either. Probably Spenser felt unconstrained to amplify a point he felt was already obvious, from his astrological information.

The second stage¹⁵ of Florimell's cycle occurs when she arrives at the witch's cabin, and since Spenser does not choose to tell us

14. The "equinoctial" periods of Florimell's cycle are the Foster (3.1.15-17) and the Fisher (3.8.20-36.) episodes; the "solstitial" periods are the witch's cabin (3.7.1-18.) and Proteus' dungeon (4.12.1-18). As I shall prove, these divisions may be compared with equinoxes and solstices because of their importance as stages within a recurring cycle, and because of their associations with either extremes or balances within the cycle.

15. The consecutive order of Florimell's stages is being described strictly with reference to her 1st through last appearances in these books. In terms of strict seasonal allegory, the time of the vernal equinox represents the second, or adolescent stage of development, and not the first stage as I have said with Florimell. For the moment at least I intend to number Florimell's stages according to when they appear, without strict regard to the seasonal distinctions which begin with the winter solstice rather than the vernal equinox.

by any direct astrological information that we have arrived at the "place" of the summer solstice, he must suggest this to us through the means of a highly charged imagery: especially through the metaphors of excessive light, warmth, length of days, and Physical isolation.¹⁶

The third stage is not directly identified by Spenser as an equinoctial stage, but instead, the imagery surrounding the episode when Florimell exchanges the land for the sea is clearly appropriate to such an event: for, as Florimell stands poised between the two great "hemispheres" of land and sea, each equally dangerous to her until the sea modifies its threat by mollifying its strength, who could deny that the imagery of balance and equality which separates land and sea, "summer" and "winter" is not suggestive of the equinoctial period? Fowler says that:-

It is clear that this symbolism of the equinox draws together many of the themes of the book. In the first place, the equinox is a supreme cosmic example of Equity.¹⁷

And indeed, the supreme cosmic example of equity in books three and four is the balance of land and sea.

The fourth stage is marked by Florimell's detention in book four, not by her immediate temptations by Proteus after she is rescued from the Fisher. For it is only when she is placed in the most extreme captivity, far within the bowels of the sea where no light can find here, that she reaches her winter solstice, or the greatest extreme of her trial. As in the witch's cabin (with which this episode contrasts as

16. See Macrobius, Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, trans. William Harris Stahl, Records of Civilization, Sources and Studies, No. XLVIII (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), II.7,8.-. pp. 208-213. Macrobius illustrates the relationships between the sun's solstitial limits and the limits of human habitation.

17. Fowler, Numbers, p. 219

its opposite extreme) Florimell is isolated and apart from human habitation. And indeed, while the imagery of the witch's cabin was that of light and radiances, here there is no light at all. Once Florimell is released from this extreme point in her cycle the suggestion of the returning spring is inescapable.¹⁸

Generally speaking, Florimell's story is structured by the four great cosmic events which are of the most importance to the seasonal world: the equinoxes and solstices. But I am not suggesting that Florimell's cycle is identical to the sun's, as inevitable as that may seem. Instead, Florimell portends the moon.¹⁹ The lunar cycle, as we know, falls behind the sun over the period of a year so that by the time the sun has completed his yearly course, the moon has one extra sidereal period to go before it has "caught up to" the sun. It is this discrepancy between solar and lunar cycles which "is the ground of all our woe" (3.5.9.), Florimell's stages are lunar extremes which are analogous to the sun's greater extremes so that the witch's cabin and the sea-dungeon may, indeed, be symbolic of solstitial periods, though they may differ greatly from them owing to the fact that as the year progresses, the moon's progress lags more and more behind the sun's. Thus, by the time Florimell reaches the low point of her cycle which is analogous to the winter solstice, it is already almost spring.

The association of the lunar and solar cycles is fairly traditional, and indeed, Spenser would have had access to Macrobius'

18. See especially (4.12.34-35.) and (5.3.1 ff.).

19. Many heroines in the Faerie Queene have lunar associations. See, especially, the Isis Church episode (5.7.1-24.) where Britomart and Artegall portend moon and sun, respectively.

Dream of Scipio which describes and discusses the solar and lunar phases with relation to one another. Macrobius' emphasis is clearly on the analogy between the greater cycle of the sun, with the lesser lunar cycle. I believe, further, that Spenser hoped to make his own analogy of Florimell's to the sun's movements more clear when he placed Florimell in total darkness during her fourth stage. For, as Macrobius tells us, the fourth hebdomad of the moon - which is analogous to the sun's winter solstice according to both Macrobius and Spenser - is characterized by the darkness of the so-called "new moon."²⁰ Thus, Spenser was able to associate Florimell's slower cycle with the sun's, demonstrating that her "means" and "extremes" were symbolic of the equinoxes and solstices, and at that same time, infusing these extremes, especially, with the imagery appropriate to the proper monthly extreme phases of the moon consisting of complete light and complete darkness.

One would have to consider Marinell, the male lover whose indifference to Florimell causes her woe, as the sun's representative. There is certainly no lack of evidence for such a theory, for Marinell is an Adonis figure,²¹ he is associated with Artegall,²² and he will become symbolic of Florimell's new Palfrey,²³ Each of these associations may be shown to rest upon a foundation of solar myth, as I shall later demonstrate.

20. Macrobius, Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, trans. Stahl, I.6.48-61., pp. 109-112.

21. Hamilton, Structure of Allegory, pp. 140 ff.

22. Artegall is another Adonis figure. His association with the sun is clearly expressed in the Isis Church episode (5.7.1-24.).

23. The Palfrey's role is complex enough to deserve a full consideration later on: basically the Palfrey is associated with the power which Florimell requires, but which gradually forsakes her over the course of seasonal time. It is symbolic of the sun's increasing indifference to the moon (see: Macrobius, Dream of Scipio, trans. Stahl, I.6.48-61., pp. 109-112.). When Marinell learns to love Florimell, the mellification of his pride (4.12.12-35.) causes his transformation into Cupid's (and Florimell's) horse. Marinell replaces the Palfrey and restores and replaces the power base needed by Florimell.

Perhaps it might be best to defer a discussion of Florimell's own lunar cycle until the far more important and more embracing solar cycle is examined in full. Also, the lunar cycle is shown to differ from the solar cycle to its greatest extent when Florimell is held in Proteus' dungeon in the concluding stanzas of book four, and a full discussion of this difference is best delayed until we reach that stage of Florimell's progress.

In the meantime the solar cycle should be discussed since it forms the main lines of the structure of Florimell's quest - despite the fact that she is unable to "keep up" within that cycle. Spenser's solar allegory might easily have been derived from Macrobius who, in his Saturnalia, discussed solar myth and seasonal allegory in great detail. In view of the frequency with which the Venus-Adonis myth seems to turn up in books three and four, one should take notice of Macrobius' explanation along the lines of seasonal allegory, predicated on the four solar stages of means and extremes which create the seasons. It is the actual structure of the seasonal allegory (i.e., the components of equinoxes and solstices themselves) which is of most importance to the following argument, but the association of the seasonal structure with the Adonis myth should be especially noted as well:-

That Adonis too is the sun will be clear beyond all doubt if we examine the religious practices of the Assyrians, among whom Venus Architis and Adonis were worshiped of old with the greatest reverence, as they are by the Phoenicians today.

Physicists have given to the earth's upper hemisphere (part of which we inhabit) the revered name of Venus, and they have called the earth's lower hemisphere Proserpine. Now six of the twelve signs of the zodiac are regarded as the upper signs and six as the lower, so the Assyrians, or Phoenicians, represent the goddess Venus as going into mourning when the sun, in the course of its yearly progress through the series of the twelve signs, proceeds to enter the sector of the lower hemisphere. For when the sun is among the lower signs, and therefore makes the days shorter, it is as if it had been carried off for a time by death and had been lost and had passed into the power of Proserpine, who, as we have said, is the deity that presides over the lower circle of the earth and the antipodes; so that Venus is believed to be in mourning then, just as Adonis is believed to have been restored to her when the sun, after passing completely through the six signs of the lower series, begins again to traverse the circle of our hemisphere, with brighter light and longer days.

In the story which they tell of Adonis killed by a boar the animal is intended to represent winter, for the boar is an unkempt and rude creature delighting in damp, muddy, and frost-covered places and feeding on the acorn, which is especially a winter fruit. And so winter, as it were, inflicts a wound on the sun, for in winter we find the sun's light and heat ebbing, and it is an ebbing of light and heat that befalls all living creatures at death.

On Mount Lebanon there is a statue of Venus. Her head is veiled, her expression sad, her cheek beneath her veil is resting on her left hand; and it is believed that as one looks upon the statue it sheds tears. This statue not only represents the mourning goddess of whom we have been speaking but it is also a symbol of the earth in winter; for at that time the earth is veiled in clouds, deprived of the companionship of the sun, and benumbed, its springs of water (which are, as it were, its eyes) flowing more freely and the fields meanwhile stripped of their finery - a sorry sight. But when the sun has come up from the lower parts of the earth and has crossed the boundary of the spring equinox, giving length to the day, then Venus is glad and fair to see, the fields are green with growing crops, the meadows with grass and the trees with leaves. That is why our ancestors dedicated the month of April to Venus. 24

24. Macrobius, *The Saturnalia*, trans. Percival Vaughan Davies, *Records of Civilization*, No. LXXIX (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), I.21.1-6, pp. 141-142.

This, then, describes the year in terms of the solar journey (exemplified in the stories of Venus and Adonis) through the six superior and six inferior signs of the zodiac, therefore emphasizing the equality of the two hemispheres which account for the equally opposing "seasons" of the year. But although no mention is made of the solstices in this specific mythological context, Macrobius is careful to discuss them in his general introduction to the subject of sun worship in antiquity. Again, one discovers that he is interested in the essential equality of the heavens: just as the equinoctial lines divides the world and zodiac into two equal and balanced halves, so the solstices will delineate another kind of equality which is based on a precise balance of extremes related to the sun's annual journey:-

. . . For, when the sun in the sign of Cancer brings the summer solstice and ends his course which is marked by the longest day (thence to begin a return course toward the shortening days), he is then called "Pythius" as hastening to his end . . . that is to say, as "running the last lap." And the same name is appropriate when the sun, again entering Capricorn, is seen to have completed the course which ends with the shortest day; so that on the completion of his yearly span in either sign Apollo is said to have put an end to the serpent, or, in other words, to have put an end to his serpentine journey.²⁵

Throughout the lengthy treatment of solar myth in the first books of Saturnalia Macrobius constantly returns to the theme of the equal division of the world and zodiac which is provided by equinoctial and solstitial points, suggesting consistently that these demarcations in the solar year represent, stage by stage, a cycle from youth to

25. Macrobius, Saturnalia, trans. Davies, I.17.61-62, p. 125.

age which continues ceaselessly in the microcosm but which has relationships with the microcosm as well. The clearest statement, perhaps, is as follows:-

These differences in age have reference to the sun, for at the winter solstice the sun would seem to be a little child, like that which the Egyptians bring forth from a shirne on an appointed day, since the day is then at its shortest and the god is accordingly shown as a tiny infant. Afterward, however, as the days go in and lengthen, the sun at the spring equinox acquires strength in a way comparable to growth to adolescence, and so the god is given the appearance of a young man. Subsequently, he is represented in full maturity, with a beard, at the summer solstice, when the sun's growth is completed. After that, the days shorten, as though with the approach of his old age - hence the fourth of the figures by which the god is portrayed. ²⁶

These observations, which could easily be augmented with more examples from Macrobius, ²⁷ are immediately relevant to the Florimell cycle in a number of ways. Florimell's love cycle passes through the same kinds of stages which Macrobius observes are common to the sun's yearly progress. Her ascent and decline, in terms of moral and psychological stages is perfectly consistent with the sun's cycle of equinoctial and solstitial stages. Florimell is, for example, divided between two equal "hemispheres" of land and sea, and her ascent and decline are certainly marked by "extremes." And finally, her cycle, beginning in spring and culminating in winter, does progress from immaturity and innocence to mature knowledge and rebirth: symbolic of the progress from youth to age, as denoted in the sun's yearly cycle. ²⁸

26. Macrobius, Saturnalia, trans. Davies, I.18.10., p. 129

27. See also Fowler's review of the Venus-Adonis myth, and the most traditional commentaries on it, in Numbers, pp. 132-144.

28. In the third and fourth books of the Faerie Queene there is much seasonal allegory reflected in the Venus-Adonis theme in Castle Joyous (3.1.34-38.) and the Garden of Adonis (3.6.29-52.). The various love stories of Britomart, Florimell, Amoret, and Belphebe are closely related to this theme as Hamilton has argued in Structure of Allegory, pp. 140 ff.

Although the general structure of Florimell's quest might be granted to be similar in many respects to the cosmological demarcations expressed in the foregoing seasonal analysis, yet there are some very troublesome difficulties which should be set right before any kind of whole-hearted agreement can be accorded.

To employ a very well-worn argument, books three and four seem to lack the simple unity of the two preceeding books.²⁹ Certainly one of the contributing factors is the confused and confusing chronology of these books. It will be readily apparent that the chronology itself comprises one of the chief difficulties of the seasonal allegory: for, the seasonal events which have been described depend on an equal and unvarying time scheme (which does not "square" with the chronological events which occur throughout both books.)

One example will suffice as an illustration of the frequent inconsistencies. If Florimell begins her chase on the day of the vernal equinox, and rides through the same night until she comes to the witch's house on the following day, then one is forced to agree that she has passed from the vernal equinox to the summer solstice in the space of one rather long night ! We must recall that certain seasonal events are very explicitly brought to our attention (e.g., the vernal equinox, and the "wintry" Protean captivity (3.8.35-43), and though there are inconsistencies, we may yet be able to embrace them within the main lines of the argument. One very plausible solution lies in the distinction between a long and a short time. Indeed, if Spenser has a seasonal allegory in mind it would seem more in character for him to be absolutely precise with relation to all of its finer points.

29. See my later remarks on this argument in chapter seven.

The Epithalamion bears witness to the genius of the poet to express his allegory with great precision and detail. Perhaps he avoided the problem simply by moving the general seasonal allegory beyond the "reach" of short time events, thus keeping the general long time chronology of the seasonal year distinct from the short time of daily events. Spenser was certainly aware of long and short time as the Epithalamion proves,³⁰ and there are other examples of this kind of distinction in Elizabethan literature as well as, for example, in Othello.³¹ In terms of the present seasonal allegory, the long and short times would be distinguished from one another in the same way as the yearly seasons are distinguished from the analogous stages within the love cycle. Thus, Florimell's love cycle has its four seasons although she may pass through these within the space of a day, or week, or even a year if she wishes. When we notice that Florimell passes from the vernal equinox to the summer solstice in one day, we are really saying that she has passed from the spring to the summer of her love within this period of time. The greater seasons of the world must remain founded on a stable time scheme, but lovers are not that much restricted: they share the same seasonal stages without the necessity of taking an equal amount of time for each one.

There is one other problem confronting the seasonal allegory, and again it deals with a conflicting chronology: it is the fact that Florimell is held in a seven month captivity by Proteus, thus making the wintry period of seasonal myth last one month in excess of its allotted time. We recall that Macrobius' clear emphasis on

30. See Kent A. Hieatt, Short Time's Endless Monument: The Symbolism of the Numbers in Edmund Spenser's 'Epithalamion' (New York, 1960).

31. Othello is, perhaps, the most famous example in Shakespeare. But Shakespeare's management of time, in this particular way, is also noticeable in the Merchant of Venice, and As You Like It. See: Shakespeare, As You Like It: A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare, ed. Horace Howard Furness, Vol. VIII (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1900), pp. 300-303.

solar myth was always directed to the essential equality of the two great "hemispheres," and therefore, it would be manifestly impossible - assuming Spenser's agreement with Macrobius - to construct a seasonal allegory on the basis of a 13 month solar year of this sort. Having postulated a long and short time, it would be easy to avoid the conflict by suggesting that the seven months belongs to Florimell's love cycle rather than to the seasonal cycle in the year. Thus, one might argue, it is not the world's, but rather only Florimell's "winter" which lasts for an extra month.

Unless one is willing to admit that the year has been unaccountably extended by one month, the relegation of the seven-month captivity to the province of short time seems inevitable. Professor Fowler tries to deal with this problem by assuming that the seven months belong to the long time scheme. He suggests that the sun's return to the superior hemisphere in the "seventh month after its loss" corresponds with the actual seven months of imprisonment associated with both Amoret and Florimell.³² In the first place there is a difference between the sun's return in the seventh month (that is, after six months in the lower hemisphere) and the return of Amoret and Florimell in what must be the eighth month after their losses (assuming that we accept Spenser's information). And secondly, the above quoted passages from the Dream of Scipio, and the Saturnalia are proof in themselves that Macrobius' emphasis is consistently on the equal balance of seasons with respect to the solar year. But although the short time argument is

32. Fowler, Numbers, pp. 215-216; and 139

capable of handling the inconsistency on its own right, there remains another possibility which has the advantage of associating the seven months with the long time scheme, while allowing the solar year to remain untouched. If Florimell were to be associated with the moon, as Britomart is through the Isis Church episode, then one might suggest that her year is the sidereal year of thirteen months. Perhaps Spenser was driving at this point when he constructed Florimell's story so that from the moment of its beginning until its final ending in 5.3.-. it had spanned precisely twenty-seven cantos: the number of days in a sidereal lunar month. Owing to the relationships between Britomart and Florimell it is possible that Florimell shares Britomart's lunar role, and that the span of Florimell's story is calculated to make this relationship apparent.

But why should Florimell's extra month be spent in winter, and how does one interpret her complaint from Proteus' dungeon that she is held long past the time for her release? Poetically, at least, the season of "winter" is best calculated to suggest the grief of Florimell's plight. And, of course, her complaint suits this interpretation by suggesting that the sun has left her behind, and has in fact completed its cycle, leaving Florimell, the moon to "catch up" one month later.³³

Without doubt, it is true that the seven month period has associations entirely independent of both kinds of time schemes. Seven is an appropriate number for any kind of "bodily" captivity since the number itself symbolizes the human condition which is a strained

33. Hamilton has demonstrated the solar and lunar roles of Redcross and Guyon, proving that Spenser used these cosmic cycles meaningfully in his allegory. See the Structure of Allegory, chapter III and "Like Race to Run:" The Parallel Structure of the Faerie Queene, Books I and II, PMLA, LXXIII (1958), 327-334.

harmony of body (symbolized by the number four) and mind, or soul (symbolized by the number three). Thus we are reminded of Ulysses' seven year "captivity" on Calypso's island; or nearer to our subject, Alma's seven year seige by Maleger (2.9.12.). That Florimell and Amoret should be kept imprisoned for seven months, both as a result of different impediments to virtuous love, should therefore not lead us to question either one of the time schemes too vigorously; instead, these imprisonments are calculated to suggest that both ladies are suffering a "fleshly" malady caused by love's tyranny.

CHAPTER 6: "Florimell's seasonal stages."

i

Thusfar I have hoped to reveal the similarities between Florimell's four-part cycle and the macrocosmic cycle of seasons in nature; to suggest why Spenser would make this kind of association; to give an account of the kind of seasonal cycle the poet might have had in mind; to cite a plausible source for such a seasonal allegory; and to anticipate the kinds of difficulties one might encounter with respect to such a theory. In this chapter I intend to examine each of Florimell's four stages from this mainlines point of view in order to show how her story illustrates the four "seasonal" means and extremes of nature.

Florimell makes her first appearance (in the beginning of the third book) in the season of spring when vegetation and all animal life is reborn and reclothed with strength and vitality.¹ Thus, we observe Florimell bursting out of a dangerous forest, and racing with such great speed that all must stop still in order to catch sight of her. In spite of the movement of the scene, there is a tableau-like quality which dominates the atmosphere. This is obviously a "set-piece," and we, like the confused knights of faerie land, are meant to ponder the appearance and reality of this event. It must have been scenes like this which inspired Keats' imagination, for if we attend closely to the description of Florimell's chase we will notice a similarity to Keats' descriptions of the Grecian Urn: there, as here, all of the

1. Fowler, Numbers, pp. 145-146.

movement is "frozen" into provocative postures which allow us almost to sense the action rather than see it:-

At length they came into a forrest wyde,
Whose hideous horror and sad trembling sound
Full griesly seem'd: Therein they long did ryde,
Yet tract of liuing creatures none they found,
Saue Beares, Lions, and Bulls, which romed them around.

All suddenly out of the thickest brush,
Vpon a milk-white Palfrey all alone,
A goodly Ladie did foreby them rush,
Whose face did seeme as cleare as Christall stone,
And eke through feare as white as whales bone:
Her garments all were wrought of beaten gold,
And all her steed with tinsell trappings shone,
Which fled so fast, that nothing mote him hold,
And scarce them leasure gaue, her passing to behold.

Still as she fled, her eye she backward threw,
As fearing euill, that pursewd her fast;
And her faire yellow locks behind her flew,
Loosely disperst with puffe of euery blast:
All as a blazing starre doth farre outcast
His hearie beames, and flaming lockes dispred
At sight whereof the people stand aghast:
But the sage wisard telles, as he has red,
That it importunes death and dolefull drerihed.

So as they gazed after her a while,
Lo where a griesly Foster forth did rush,
Breathing out beastly lust her to defile:
His tyreling iade he fiercely forth did push,
Through thicke and thin, both ouer banke and bush
In hope her to attaine by hooke or crooke,
That from his gorie sides the bloud did gush:
Large were his limbes, and terrible his looke,
And in his clownish hand a sharp bore speare he shooke.

(3.1.14-17.)

In this carefully constructed scene it is important to notice that there is a significant difference between the white Palfrey and the fair Florimell, and once one is aware of it Florimell's significance becomes apparent. Traditionally, a restless horse may represent the unmanageable passions which need to be restrained by the force of reason,² and

2. See Edgar Wind, Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance, 2nd ed. (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1967), p. 145.

there is little doubt that such an interpretation may apply to Florimell as well;³ but, the relationship between horse and rider reveals another, even more important mystery which is particularly important to the third book. The image of the fair lady is especially well described, even to the extent of reminding one of painting: her backward-turning eye, and her yellow locks streaming out behind her, for example.

These descriptions contribute to the sense of "frozen" movement as in a painting, and it is my opinion that Spenser wished to emphasize the stability of Florimell, in contrast to the instability of the Palfrey which moves ceaselessly before our eyes, thus distilling the message of the Garden of Adonis and infusing this essential seasonal message into the image of Florimell and the Palfrey. Florimell is "frozen" movement, while the Palfrey is actively moving; Florimell seems stable, ideal, and eternal; the Palfrey is unstable, and always changing (in the sense of moving). The whole image is calculated to anticipate not only the mystery of the Garden of Adonis (i.e., eternity through mutability, permanence through change), but also the mystery of Florimell's power to endure the test of Proteus' dungeon. For Proteus is a symbol of change and mutability, and his power of change will prove useless in his attempts to constrain Florimell to love him.⁴ Indeed, she emerges from her captivity with a stronger will and a greater power than when she was taken prisoner, thus showing that her contact with

3. Also, Braggadocchio separates Guyon from his horse Brigadore. Guyon reclaims Brigadore at Florimell's wedding ceremony (5.3.29-34). Marinell and Florimell are obviously being associated with the reunion of horse and rider.
4. Spenser obviously uses Proteus as a symbol of change in (3.8.39-42.); see, also, Wind, Pagan Mysteries, pp. 191-217.

Proteus' mutable world was in some ways, more beneficial than harmful.⁵ And so it would be if she relied on mutability as a foundation for her power.

What, then, is Florimell? She is a frail and fragile maiden who is seeking her indifferent lover, Marinell; her beauty is such that all knights love her; yet, even the strongest of knights are unable to find and embrace her; and finally, she is the example of beauty--implicitly, feminine beauty--if Britomart's reactions to her are to be heeded:-

The whiles faire Britomart, whose constant mind,
Would not so lightly follow beauties chace,
Ne reekt of Ladies Loue, did stay behind...
(3.1.19.)

If one adds that she also seems to be an ideal or universal form of some kind, which seems stable in spite of swift change, there is but one answer to the mystery of Florimell; she represents the ideal beauty of the feminine nature. She is a dynamic symbol of the Garden of Adonis who demonstrates that the feminine nature is characterized by eternal beauty which is founded on material generation. Her quest for love, therefore, illustrates the feminine nature's need for contact with the masculine nature, in order that the ceaseless material generation of the feminine nature may continue. It is unavoidably true that Florimell represents a force which is involved in the greater forces of nature and, therefore, any echos of "Flora," or indeed of Venus, are well intended.⁶ Florimell represents the ideal form, of the feminine nature, which remains

5. Florimell is reborn in spring and her sufferings incurred in her period of sterile dormancy are finally rewarded in (4.12.33-5; and 5.3.1-40.).
6. Hamilton has argued in the Structure of Allegory, pp. 138-152 that Florimell and Marinell are types of Venus and Adonis, and Psyche and Cupid.

eternal through seasonal mutability, and is beautiful and desirable.

Our first introduction to Florimell's story is very carefully constructed and, indeed, the three stanzas which describe the chase are as compact and as rich with symbolic suggestions as it is possible to make them. Many important levels of meaning which will be developed in connection with Florimell are anticipated here, as we have already noted through the anticipation of Florimell's survival of Proteus' captivity.⁷ In spite of the variety of symbolic interpretations which may be applied to this first view of Florimell, the imagery of the episode is almost shockingly literal so that it is virtually impossible to miss the general drift of the allegory; though everything which one senses at this point waits upon further development and amplification.

We may sense Florimell's association with the feminine nature, with an ideal of beauty (particularly feminine beauty, as I have argued), and with the mystery of eternity through mutability. Moreover, we may see the horse and rider as symbolic of the warfare of passion and reason, or of mind and body. These speculations seem valid enough with respect to Florimell at this point, and all of them are borne out by her later adventures. But, there are other suggestions which are certainly related to the mystery of the feminine nature, and which are given a great deal of emphasis, even at this point.

I refer to the seasonal allegory which is present in two ways: first, by the initial association of Florimell with the feminine nature which excels in seasonal generation and second, by the imagery of seasonal "death" and change which is evident in these stanzas. We have

7. Florimell's dependency on the swiftly flying Palfrey implies the beneficial relationship between ideal form and change. Therefore, her later trials in the vast ocean of change are anticipated here.

the wisard's word for the dire portent of Florimell's chase, and his warning is essentially of death, which indicates that Florimell's beauty is threatened by time.⁸ Of course, as a symbol of the feminine nature, Florimell must certainly be subject to mutability and the ravages of time. Therefore, the wisard's interpretation of "beauties chace" means, in all probability, that although the world may remain eternally beautiful, the individual must die. The wisard has simply brushed aside the veil to see that Florimell's ideal beauty rests on the sad fact of mortality. But we also have the Foster and his death-threatening "bore speare". It is this image which gives the seasonal allegory its own anticipated context throughout the Florimell story; for any spear could threaten death, but Spenser has chosen to remind us of the boar who killed Adonis and brought winter to the world.⁹ Florimell's journey confirms her progress toward winter, for Proteus is described as a "wintry" force (3.8.39-42.). Can we possibly deny, in light of this later event, that the Foster's boar spear threatens the seasonal death of winter?

Admittedly, the first stage of the Florimell story does not readily suggest, through its imagery, that its context is that of spring. One might argue that the vitality of the scene, the youthful freshness of Florimell (perhaps, Flora) and the grim power of the forest beasts, and

8. Florimell's brief, comet-like appearance is interpreted as a portent of death and sorrow by the wisard. He reads a seasonal message into the image of Florimell and the Palfrey.
9. Adonis' death was also imputed to Venus' lust and Persephone's jealousy (and Mars') jealousy. See: Robert Graves, The Greek Myths, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1960), vol. 1, sec. 18 h-1, pp. 69-71. I have used the 1966 reprint.

the Foster, are calculated to suggest the world's youthful season of spring. But the analogy may seem strained. Again, it might appear to be granting too much to apply the astrological information concerning Britomart to the story of Florimell with the purpose of demonstrating the context of spring for both women. But, although this application may seem somewhat optimistic, a little reflection on the interrelationships between Britomart and Florimell might make it more likely. It is important to the seasonal allegory to notice the spring context for Florimell's first stage of her love quest, and although Spenser may have implied it by his imagery, and even by making Florimell reminiscent of spring through her name and her youthfulness, it is best to find a less tenuous kind of proof.

In order to show that the astrological information associated with Britomart may apply to Florimell, it is necessary to demonstrate that the quests of these heroines are related, and that there is a purpose to be gained by having each quest begin in the same symbolic season. Indeed, the relationship between Britomart and Florimell is essential to an understanding of the love-debate, for in Florimell's four-part quest we observe the progress of the feminine nature throughout its seasonal stages from springtime innocence to mature wedded love; and therefore, Florimell's quest shadows Britomart's own showing us in extreme stages analogous to seasonal extremes, the progress of Britomart's own love. The two heroines are similar in many ways, and not just in the broad lines of their quests which take them across the spectrum of bodily and mental torture and temptation, and from youthful innocence to marriage. They are also similar in detail. These similarities

make it impossible for us not to accord the astrological information to Florimell. For, indeed, Florimell's quest is Britomart's quest on various externalized levels.¹⁰

10. At the very least the two quests are parallel; I believe Florimell's quest to be an externalized account of Britomart's love, as does Hamilton in The Structure of Allegory in the Faerie Queene, p. 144. The similarities which demonstrate that the two quests are related to one another may be deduced from various significant passages and events:

- 1) Aside from the long-term chronology which seems to associate Britomart and Florimell's initial stages in their love quests with the season of spring, it is undeniable that the sight of Florimell in 3.1.15-17. causes a reaction in Britomart (3.1.19.) and that she is subsequently led to her first trial in Castle Joyous while still under the influence of the resolve to shun "beauties chace." In effect, the beginning of Britomart's own love-quest waits upon the appearance of Florimell, and thus, it is possible to argue that for this reason both these heroines begin their quests at the same moment.
- 2) Both ladies are similarly chaste and virtuous: see 3.2.23. for a description of Britomart, and 3.5.8. for Florimell.
- 3) Furthermore, both ladies seek marriage and eschew base lust, for notice 3.3.1-3 for Britomart and 3.5.3-10 for Florimell.
- 4) Both heroines are upset in love by the indifference of their "lovers." See Britomart's reaction to Arthegall 3.2.10.ff. Arthegall remains unaware of Britomart's love until 4.6.19.ff; Marinell is not only indifferent to Florimell, but also to love in general 3.5.9., and he does not know of Florimell's love and sufferings for him until 4.12.12.
- 5) Both "lovers" are associated with Achilles: Arthegall at stanza 3.2.25.; and Marinell is associated to Achilles by a similar mythological foundation, i.e., his mother is one of the Nereids, he is subject to a fatal prophesy, and love will be his undoing 3.4.19ff.
- 6) Arthegall and Marinell are both figures of Adonis: Arthegall is associated with the sun (Osiris) 5.7.1ff. and is doomed to die young, like Adonis, 3.3.28. Marinell may also have associations with the sun, but it seems uncertain, in any case, whether or not it is he or Florimell who is depicted on this symbolic level in 4.12.33-5. Taking Spenser's most usual pattern into account, i.e., sonal-masculine, lunar-feminine, it is possible that Marinell is meant to suggest the sun after all. But if this association with Adonis seems unlikely, Hamilton has shown us that the wound Marinell receives in his left side qualifies him as an Adonis figure. See, the Structure of Allegory, pp. 140-156.

Hamilton has argued that Florimell's story is related to Britomart's in several ways, and he discusses, in detail, Florimell's associations with Psyche, showing that Florimell's trials may be interpreted as the soul's progress in love.¹¹ Indeed, her quest reflects two things at once: the soul of the "feminine nature" in a quest for love; and Britomart's own particular progress in love. Since the two stories of Florimell and Britomart are essentially, the same story, the springtime context of Britomart's adventures may properly be associated with Florimell's. In any case, it is enough to argue that for both maidens the third book begins at the time of their own "spring" in terms of life and love.

Florimell's seasonal progress reflects certain moral and philosophical "means" and "extremes" which, though they are analogous to certain cosmic events, are clearly meant to be interpreted morally and philosophically: for instance, though we may suggest that Psyche's journey into the underworld reflects a "seasonal" interpretation, we must still regard Psyche's labors as belonging to the soul's moral progress, and we must be careful to consider other than seasonal allegories. We must agree with Fowler in respect to Psyche-Proserpine-Florimell, that her story is complex.¹²

Florimell's journey from the Witch's cabin to Proteus' dungeon is analogous to Britomart's progress from Castle Joyous to the House of Busyrane because the two maidens are experiencing the trials of a love cycle and the ground over which they must pass is polarized into the forces of body and mind. Florimell's trials symbolize the extreme

11. Hamilton, Structure of Allegory, pp. 138-152.

12. Fowler, Numbers, p. 134.

warfare of body and mind within her own nature; in turn, these extremes are comparable with nature's extremes, thus linking nature's realm with the microcosm of human nature.

By placing Florimell's quest within the all-embracing context of Britomart's story we are able to associate the structural order of Florimell's journey with the order of Britomart's quest; and since the two maidens are so similar to one another as regards their trials in love, one may continue to argue that some of the information concerning Britomart's confusion in love may be applied equally well to Florimell. Glauce's words are appropriate in this sense:-

But if thou may with reason yet repress
 The growing euill, ere it strength haue got,
 And thee abandond wholly doe possesse,
 Against it strongly striue, and yield thee not,
 Till thou in open field adowne be smot.
 But if the passion mayster thy fraile might,
 So that needs loue or death must be thy lot,
 Then I auow to thee, by wrong or right
 To compasse they desire, and find that loued knight.

Here, then, is the indication of the warfare (3.2.46) between reason and passion which causes Britomart's quest from Castle Joyous to the House of Busyrane, and Florimell's similar progress from the Witch's cabin to Proteus' dungeon. Glauce' preference for mental temptation and torment, rather than physical temptation, is made explicit in (3.2.40); the two naturally go together in love, but Glauce clearly believes that reason must withstand assaults of the baser passions.

We note her relief in the following stanza:-

Daughter (said she what need ye be dismayd,
 Or why make ye such Monster of your mind?
 Of much more vncouth thing I was affrayd;
 Of filthy lust, contrarie vnto kind:
 But this affection nothing straunge I find;
 For who with reason can you aye reprove,
 To loue the semblant pleasing most your mind,
 And yield your heart, whence ye cannot remoue?
 Ne guilt in you, but in the tyranny of loue.
 (3.2.40)

What is Florimell's quest if not the enactment of Glauce's advice? She has experienced the passion of love and has resolved to find her "loued knight" or else "die" in the attempt. It is the same choice as Britomart's: either love or die. We notice, in this regard, that Florimell's quest is continually overshadowed with the suggestion of death.¹³

If this discussion seems to have strayed from the seasonal argument it is only because Spenser's own seasonal allegory is, at this first stage, only metaphorical and potential. We recognize that Florimell is related to seasonal events because of her association with the feminine nature; we understand the threat of time implied in the wizard's interpretation; and we realize that the boar-spear carried by the Foster hints at the seasonal Adonis myth. But these things are not yet explained to us. Spenser has made it clear that we are to recognize Florimell as the image of the feminine nature. Further, he has brought Florimell and Britomart together, literally and metaphorically, (i.e. both ladies are maidens in the spring of their life, and both actually meet one another, or have some contact) in order that one may see these ladies as parallel to one another in matters of love. Florimell's story must be interpreted with relation to both the major image of the third book (the Garden of Adonis, representing the eternal, material generation of the feminine nature) and the major character, Britomart, whose own love story embraces Florimell's

13. The suggestions of death associated with Florimell and her quest begin with our first introduction to her at 3.1.15-17 when the wizard tells us that she portends "death and dolefull drerihed." Florimell seeks to unite herself with Marinell who is reportedly dead (3.5.9-10.). The witch's son offers images of death and captivity to Florimell in 3.7.17. Florimell is threatened with death by the witch's monster (3.7.21-9.). Her exchange of land for sea threatens her death (3.7.26.). Satyrane, upon finding her discarded girdle and the devoured palfrey, assumes her death and broadcasts it (3.8.47.). And finally, Florimell cries out from Proteus' dungeon that she must either find release or die (4.12.9.).

The second stage of Florimell's love cycle is more detailed and explicit than the first since it portrays Florimell's first real trial in love. The Witch's cabin symbolizes a fleshly extreme of Florimell's cycle. It is here that Florimell, like Britomart in Castle Joyous, finds lust to be attractive and desirable. Her temptations are, therefore, greater than ever before, and there will be a real danger of her demise. The Foster had been so hideous that horse and rider fled him alike,¹⁴ but the courtship by the Witch's son is no less dangerous, even if it is deceptively reminiscent of innumerable scenes of "woodland romance."¹⁵ "Death" and "captivity" are hidden in the pretty gifts her offers, and it is for this reason that Florimell decides to leave in order to escape the passions which have been aroused within her.

The seasonal allegory is evident here in such matters as the Palfrey's sudden and unexpected stop, Florimell's continued journey to the isolated cabin, the imagery of light and radiance she brings to the "gloomy" place, her association with Diana or one of her "crew", and the sense of the extreme isolation of the cabin which is, we are told, balanced by an equally extreme opposite to which Florimell will be led by fortune.¹⁶

14. Florimell's innocence compares with the condition of Alma's House: In Alma's house, the diverse frames were maintained in harmony by the innocent Alma; correspondingly, Florimell's innocence keeps horse and rider together, serving one another on an instinctive level.

15. A. A. Jack, Chaucer and Spenser, cited from A Variorum Edition of the Works of Edmund Spenser, ed. Greenlaw, Osgood and Padelford (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1934), book three, P. 263. Hereafter cited as Variorum Spenser.

16. "Need teacheth her this lesson hard and rare. That fortune all in equall launce doth sway . . ." If Florimell must suffer an extreme trial on the land, we are told to expect an equally balanced extreme later on.

The seasonal allegory can demonstrate the relationship between the Witch's cabin and Proteus' dungeon in terms of equally balanced "solstitial" extremes; this, in itself, is of great value in arguing that these particular episodes represent a dichotomy of body and mind. Therefore, I shall begin the discussion of this episode by treating the seasonal allegory first of all, and I shall establish the particular context for the Witch's cabin and Proteus' dungeon.

Macrobius' emphasis, when discussing seasonal myth, was clearly on the equality and balance of the heavens. Therefore, he would have agreed with Spenser's narration at the time of the Palfrey's sudden halt that " . . . fortune all in equall launce doth sway . . . " (3.7.4.), depending on the definition of the key word "fortune" in this context. And in a sense, my assertion that Florimell's cycle is a cosmic one is an attempt to associate her own particular kind of "fortune" with the strictly patterned and structured cycles of nature.

Florimell's "fortune" is bound up in the equal sway of nature and Spenser means to warn us that the extreme trial to which she is heading at the moment that the Palfrey suddenly stops will be counter-balanced at some later date. From Macrobius' Saturnalia we have noted that the seasonal world is divided not only by the line of the equinox, but also by the line of the solstices so that the sun's journey from equinox to equinox takes the same amount of time as its progress from solstice to solstice: the period of six months. From the winter to the summer solstice there is a six-month period of ascent and growing strength; and conversely, from the summer to the winter solstice, there is an equal period of decline and growing weakness. This is the "equal sway" of nature in which Florimell's "fortune" is involved. And indeed, Florimell's arrival at the Witch's cabin is

analogous to the sun's arrival at the place of the summer solstice which makes its farthest extreme in the upper "hemisphere." It is apparent that Florimell's journey to the Witch's cabin is one of "ascent" and growing strength, and that her journey from the Witch's cabin marks a decline.¹⁷ Indeed, up until the Witch's cabin her Palfrey is ungovernable and her journey takes her farther and farther from the ocean:¹⁸ hence her arrival at the Witch's cabin marks her farthest extreme in the superior hemisphere of the land. And her journey from the cabin clearly begins a decline toward the sea, the inferior hemisphere, during which the Palfrey declines in strength until her is unable to continue his flight any longer. And furthermore, Florimell's entry into the cabin is characterized by startling images of light and radiance. The light of Florimell becomes familiar in that "desert place," (3.7.15.) we are told. And, again, corresponding to the imagery of the solstice, the witch's cabin is an isolated place, far

17. The Palfrey is strong until he reaches the vicinity of the Witch's cabin. He is weak thereafter (3.7.4.; 3.7.18-19). Florimell begins to be distinguishable from the Palfrey after (3.7.4.)

18. Florimell's ultimate goal is to unite with the sea-knight Marinell who guards the riches of the rich strand, and keeps them from fruitful use. Therefore, she desires to journey to the sea. But while her Palfrey masters her, she travels in the opposite direction. The Palfrey brings her to a most isolated habitation on the land. And, when she leaves this extreme place she makes the Palfrey "His late miswandred wayes now to remeasure right . . ." (3.7.18.). The Palfrey is forced to retrace his steps, and once he does so Florimell and the Palfrey immediately arrive at the ocean. If we are to expect an "equal fortune" for Florimell then it is obvious that the Witch's cabin and the sea dungeon are set up as equal extremes in her cycle. If this is so, then it is arguable that the Witch's cabin is as extreme a place on land as the sea sungeon is an extreme in the sea: in other words, the Witch's cabin marks Florimell's farthest distance from the sea just as her imprisonment in Proteus' dungeon marks her farthest extreme distance from the land.

from other habitation. ¹⁹

But, of course, it is not all that simple. As in the other levels of allegory, Florimell is still quite distinguishable from her Palfrey so that while it may be true that the Palfrey functions in a way which suggests a seasonal cycle, Florimell, herself, seems to depart from it. If the Palfrey's sudden stop indicates the solstice, then why does Florimell dissociate herself from it and continue her journey to an even more extreme place? And why does Florimell actually gain in strength after the witch's cabin episode? ²⁰

The clearest answer is that Florimell's cycle depends on the greater cycle of the sun, but is independent of it to a certain extent. It is not necessary to discard the context of a seasonal cycle involving the analogy of the Witch's cabin to a solstitial extreme. As even the Witch's son knew, Florimell's light and radiance associates her with sun, but there is yet the distinction to be made between substance and accident with regard to that light. It is no idle coincidence that the witch's son inquires "by what accident she there arrived," any more than it is coincidence that the word "mansion" ²¹ is used to

19. See Macrobius, the Dream of Scipio, trans. Stahl, 2.7.1-21: the farthest extreme of the sun at the solstices corresponds, on the earth, with the farthest reaches of human life. Therefore, the land nearest the solstitial extremes would be virtually uninhabited.

20. Florimell is at the mercy of the Palfrey up until (3.7.3.) because the Palfrey has, until this very moment, "Conquered the maintring raines out of her weary wrest . . . "; but she reverses the situation in (3.7.18) when she masters the Palfrey and forces it to obey her will. Thus, she gains in strength while the Palfrey weakens.

21. "Mansion" is particularly associated with astrology and the moon, See Walter, Clyde Curry, Chaucer and the Medieval Sciences (New York; Oxford University Press, 1926), pp. 171 ff.

describe the hovel of the Witch's cabin.²² In fact, the use of the word "accident" (3.7.14) is a hint to the reader to distinguish between Florimell's light and the light of the sun. The sun is the substance, and the light is an "accident" which qualifies the definition of the sun in the same way that secondary qualities qualify primary qualities. The light which Florimell brings to the cabin is an accident of the sun, since Florimell is not the origin of that light, but the borrower and benefactor of it. She is the moon who shines with the sun's light. Once her association with the moon can be demonstrated, one can begin to relate her course to the greater cycle of the sun, and thereby resolve the difficulties which the seasonal allegory seems to have incurred through her alteration from the main lines of the solar cycle.

With this in mind it is interesting that Florimell's presence in the witch's cabin sheds a light and a radiance which is confused with the sun's light, and even seems indistinguishable from it:-

He comming home at vndertine, there found
 The fairest creature, that he euer saw,
 Sitting beside his mother on the ground;
 The sight whereof did greatly him adaw,
 And his base thought with terroure and with aw
 So inly smot, that as one, which had gazed
 On the bright Sunne vnwares, doth soone withdraw
 His feeble eyne, with too much brightnesse dazed,
 So stared he on her, and stood long while amazed.
(3.7.13.)

22. Substance and accident are philosophical terms which distinguish the essential nature of something (the substance) from the outward appearance such as color, weight, texture, radiance, etc. (the accidents). "Mansion" is defined by OED: "3, b. In early use: the chief residence of a lord; a manor-house. Hence, later a large and stately residence. 1512." The usage which Spenser had in mind was, more probably, the figurative sense: ". . . of the body as enclosing the soul" 1526. It is in this sense that Chapman uses the word "mansion" in *The Iliad*, Book 9, 1. 395: "But, when the white guard of our teeth no longer can containe, Our humane soule, away it flies; and, once gone, never more, To her fraile mansion any can her lost powers restore." George Chapman, Chapman's Homer: the Iliad, ed. Allardyce Nicoll (London, 1957), p. 191.

The Witch's reaction to Florimell is far more telling because she recognizes a heavenly hew which reminds her of Diana:-

She was astonisht at her heauenly hew,
And doubted her to deeme an earthly wight,
But or some Goddesse, or of Dianes crew . . (3.7.11.)

The three manifestations of the moon goddess are Cynthia, Diana and Persephone.²³ Florimell is associated with Persephone because of her descent into the underworld of the sea;²⁴ she is here associated with Diana or one of her crew; and the association with Cynthia, and the moon, itself, is suggested by her association with the lunar Britomart.²⁵ In fact, the scene when Florimell "gathers up" her golden hair in the Witch's presence is a direct echo of a scene in Castle Joyous where Britomart unfastened her helmet. Notice, in the Witch's cabin:-

Tho gan she gather vp her garments rent,
And her loose lockes to dight in order dew,
With golden wreath and gorgeous ornament;
Whom such whenas the wicked Hag did vew,
She was astonisht at her heauenly hew . . ' (3.7.11.)

The sight of her "golden locks" contributes to her "heauenly hew" and associates her with Diana. In Castle Joyous the effect is similar when Britomart reveals her face to the company:-

As when faire Cynthia, in darkesome night,
Is in a noyous cloud enueloped,
Where she may find the substance thin and light,
Breakes forth her siluer beames, and her bright hed
Discouers to the world discomfited . . .
Such was the beautie and the shining ray,
With which faire Britomart gaue light vnto the day. (3.1.43.)

23. See Vincent Cartari, Images Des Dieux, traduites par Anth. du Verdier Sieur de Vaupriaus (Lion, 1610), p. 127. Cartari is one of the mythographers mentioned by Jean Seznec in the Survival of the Pagan Gods: The Mythological Tradition and its Place In Renaissance Humanism And Art, trans. Barbara F. Sessions, 2nd ed., Bollingen Series XXXVIII (New York: Pantheon Books Inc., 1953), pp. 313 ff.

24. Northrop Frye, The Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957). I have used the reprint (New York: Atharoum, 1969), p. 138.

25. See my note 10 this chapter.

In each case, a lady reveals her chastity by revealing her face or hair. In Britomart's case, there is no doubt that she is associated with the moon, and with chastity; and in Florimell's case (in view of the parallel nature of her quest with Britomart's, and the echo of a scene with Britomart in Castle Joyous), it would seem plausible that her association with one of Diana's crew hints broadly at her lunar role.

Finally, even the imagery of "gloom" associated with the Witch's domain (3.7.6.) may serve to illustrate Florimell's lunar role, for Florimell comes into a "gloomy hollow glen" where she is capable of shedding her light and illuminating the "desert mansion." Perhaps the gloom which she dispells is the gloom of night.

Up until now I have merely suggested that certain images and mythical patterns hint at Florimell's lunar role; but now it is time to show how she functions with relation to the sun, and why her alterations from the sun's great cycle make the seasonal allegory more sophisticated instead of less plausible.

If Florimell "portends" the moon then one must find the sun's representative. And by now it should be somewhat apparent that it must be the Palfrey.²⁶ He is, as we have seen, strong and vital up until the moment when he is constrained to stop and rest, just before reaching the Witch's cabin; and he is weaker after the "cabin" episode, for Florimell masters him and forces him to "remeasure" his "late miswandred wayes." We have also noted that his progress

26. There is a difficulty in assigning the solar cycle to the Palfrey - as I shall later demonstrate at greater length. But at present one should notice that the Palfrey's sudden weakness at the supposed time of the solstice of summer is apparently inappropriate. It can only be that Spenser is modifying the seasonal allegory in accordance with another, perhaps psychological level of allegory.

from the time of the equinox until his astonishing stop takes him farther and farther onto the land, and that when he is mastered after his stop he is forced to retrace his steps and head toward the sea. Finally, his death is the result of his being devoured by the Witch's monster: an event broadly reminiscent of frequent seasonal references to the sun's "wound" in winter, and perhaps even intentionally reminiscent of Adonis' death by the boar of winter. It is particularly apparent that the Palfrey's cycle corresponds with Macrobius' description of the sun's progress from the vernal to the autumnal equinox for we have the strong ascent up until the "solstice," and the decline and growing weakness thereafter. And the conclusion is no less traditional with the "death" of the Palfrey by a pursuing beast, and even the shift in balance between two great "hemispheres" of land and sea.

But even more important is the fact that in seasonal myth the sun represents the force of bodily as well as spiritual vitality in human beings. In a strictly seasonal allegory, the sun is associated most commonly with the material world (with corn crops, for example), and, by analogy, with the human body because it bestows health and regenerative powers to man.²⁷ Robert Ellrodt reviewed some Renaissance interpretations of the Venus-Adonis myth, especially referring to Natalis Comes, Macrobius, and Boccaccio. Throughout his book, Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser-- which so rejects Neoplatonism in Spenser that the title is almost misleading-- Ellrodt has occasion to

27. That is so say that nature's regenerative powers are to man in general as the "body" of nature is to the body of man.

cite these, and others, (i.e., Equicola and Le Roy) on seasonal allegory.

When discussing the Venus-Adonis myth he says:-

. . . Natalis Comes offered two cosmological interpretations. One saw in the dying and reviving hero an image of the fate of corn, which stays six months underground with Proserpind and enjoys Venus, that is the mildness of the air, for the remaining months. This myth could be extended to the general cycle of vegetation. But far more space was devoted to another interpretation. Adonis was identified with the Sun, "father of germination", and the boar with Winter. . . The boar is the emblem of Winter for, in the words of Macrobius, "Winter is as a wound to the Sun, whose light and heat it lessens, which happens through death in all living beings." ²⁸

The two interpretations obviously correspond to one another. It is clear that the sun's significance is largely determined as the provider of heat and light, and vegetational generation in the material world. Macrobius explicitly associates the sun with the human body when, in Saturnalia, he says:-

. . . Aesculapius is the healthful power which comes from the essence of the sun to give help to mortal minds and bodies. . . ²⁹

The sun is therefore the principle of health in humans, and is associated with the body of man as well as with the "body" of the world through the fate of vegetation.

The Palfrey's "course," or cycle, traces the means and the extreme of the high season of vegetation. His death hints at the devoured

28. See Robert Ellrodt, Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser, p.87

29. Macrobius, Saturnalia, trans. Davies, I.20.1., p. 137.

power of vegetation when the first six month seasonal cycle is at an end. Even the fact that the monster issues from a cave when it begins to track down the Palfrey and rider may recall the dreadful boar of winter who, in the Garden of Adonis where both equinoctial periods converge, is imprisoned in a cave (3.6.48). The Palfrey's death is therefore the sun's "wound".

If the Palfrey represents the sun on this strictly limited seasonal basis his stop at the third stanza of canto seven must shadow the summer solstice:-

So long as breath, and hable puissance
Did native courage vnto him supply,
His pace he freshly forward did aduance,
And carried her beyond all ieopardy,
But nought that wanteth rest, can long aby.
He hauing through incessant trauell spent
His force, at last perforce a downe did ly,
Ne foot could further moue: The Lady gent
Thereat was suddein strooke with great astonishment.
(3.7.3.)

It should be noted that the Palfrey's astonishing behavior does not suit the usual interpretation of the violently restive horse as the symbol of unruly passions. And yet it is difficult to deny that Florimell's trial in the Witch's cabin is attributable to the Palfrey's masterful power which has brought her to the Witch's neighborhood. The Palfrey is the cause of Florimell's temptations even though at the time of her extreme "trials" he is suddenly struck with weakness rather than the more usual fit of masterful strength. Obviously, Spenser wanted to suggest that the Palfrey-- representing the passions, and desires of the body-- had become untrustworthy and had failed Florimell through some innate weakness.³⁰

This weakness is as much trouble for the seasonal allegory as

30. Spenser demonstrates how the passions begin to weaken to the temptations of lust.

for the psychological, because when the sun has reached the summer solstice, common observation supports the fact that the sun is at his strongest in terms of light, heat, length of days, and generative power. Surely the weak Palfrey is very un-solar at this point. Yet, one may, perhaps, recall that arguments of this sort have been applied to Adonis in the Garden of Adonis-- unsuccessfully, in my view. C.S. Lewis had said, challenging Ellrodt's cosmological approach to the Garden, that Adonis was "obstinately un-solar" because he inhabits a "gloomy grove:"

a thicket of 'shady boughes'. . . where 'Phoebus beams'-- his own beams, if he were the sun!-- can never reach him. . . in a garden of 'eternal moisture' upon earth. 31

The point is that the Palfrey's weakness probably has more to do with other than seasonal levels of allegory. The uncharacteristic weakness does not invalidate the seasonal argument any more than Adonis' characteristics could prove him entirely "un-solar." I believe the Palfrey's weakness to be suggestive of the failure of the body to serve Florimell-- as it had done by fleeing the Foster-- any longer because for the first time the desire of lust has been awakened in Florimell so that a dualism, or split, occurs between horse and rider, body and mind.

But there is yet more evidence to support a solar interpretation of the Palfrey so that the problem of his "uncharacteristic" weakness may seem to matter less and less. It is the association of the Palfrey with Marinell, the indifferent lover. If anyone should represent the sun it should be Marinell because he is the masculine lover whose withdrawal from the light-seeking Florimell has led to her sorrow.

31. Fowler, Numbers, p. 136

32. In seasonal allegory the sun is always masculine and the moon, feminine. One may characterize the moon as "light-seeking," and indeed, this is a just epithet if one recalls Florimell's total darkness in Proteu's dungeon.

But Marinell spends most of his time out of sight, for the third book begins with the premise that he has suffered a kind of "death" because of his refusal to love. Hamilton has associated this death with the death of Adonis, thus extending the solar myth to the proud sea-knight.³³ And other relationships (particularly with Artegall who is later associated with Osyris, the sun) complete Marinell's association with solar myth.³⁴ The proud young knight is wounded in the left side, pours out his blood on the rich shore like a sacred, sacraficial ox, and is taken into the deep, healing waters of the sea to wait for Florimell.³⁵ Marinell is the sun; that lover to whom Florimell is attracted.

Marinell and the Palfrey seem, therefore, to share a solar allegory between them: The Palfrey is responsible for leading Florimell to the sea, and Marinell is responsible for her release. The association of Marinell with the Palfrey becomes apparent when Marinell transforms himself into the image of a horse-- Cupid's horse, Florimell regains her Palfrey, though not the original one who belonged to the innocent maiden. This transformation suggests a rather complex exchange of roles in love, and I shall treat it in full at a later time. Suffice it to say that Marinell, the masculine "sun," descends into matter at love's bidding, and takes up the Palfrey's role. He gives his passion and desire to Florimell who has discarded hers in acticipation of his liberating love.

Whatever this transformation may suggest for other levels of allegory, in the seasonal allegory it definitely affirms the association of the Palfrey with Marinell, and both with the sun. We may compare these stanzas:-

33. Hamilton, Structure of Allegory, p. 141

34. See my note 10 this chapter

35. Again, Hamilton, Structure of Allegory, p. 141. It is worth noting that both Marinell and the Palfrey are "killed" on the seashore.

Her wearie Palfrey closely, as she might,
 Now well recovered after long repast,
 In his proud furnitures she freshly dight,
 His late miswandred wayes now to remeasure right.
 (3.7.18.)

These lines describe Florimell's flight from the Witch's cabin. But notice stanza (4.1213.) where Marinell is transformed into Cupid's horse:-

Thus whilst his stony heart with tender ruth
 Was toucht, and might courage mollifide,
 Dame Venus sonne that tameth stubborne youth
 With iron bit, and maketh him abide,
 Till like a victor on his backe he ride,
 Into his mouth his maystring bridle threw,
 That made him stoupe, till he did him bestride:
 Then gan he make him tread his steps anew,
 And learne to loue, by learning louers paines to rew.

If the Palfrey represents the sun's course in the high season of spring to autumn, Florimell represents the moon whose journey from the equinox begins on the foundation of the Palfrey's strength. The begin their course together, but very soon it becomes apparent that there is a difference between them. The moon begins to lag behind the sun so that the Palfrey's sudden stop, symbolizing the summer solstice, occurs before Florimell, the moon, has reached her analogous extreme. Thus, she is forced to continue on foot until she has reached her own "solsitial" period. And the light she shines with is the light of the full moon, the second hebdomad, which also is symbolic of the summer solstice.³⁶ The remaining decline to the sea is characterized by an even more obvious differentiation between horse and rider, sun and moon. The Palfrey is quickly "sacrificed," leaving Florimell to drift aimlessly on the sea until fit time for her equinoctial period; the sun having, symbolically, passed through this phase before her. Her condition becomes even more extremem in the last, "solstitial" phase of her cycle

36. Macrobius, Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, trans. Stahl, I.6.54-61., pp. 111-112.

which occurs shortly before the time of the sun's rebirth in spring.

The natural extremes and means of the solar cycle are easily adaptable to suggest psychological phases, and the seasonal context which makes Florimell's cycle an imitation of the sun's, does just that. The cosmic events of solstices and equinoxes enable us to fit Florimell's story within a context which is meaningful at all levels. If for no other reason, we may appreciate the fact that Florimell's literal sufferings are associated with extremes of nature. But at present we shall be concerned with the moral and psychological extremes, primarily.

When Florimell is asked why she has come "vnwelcomed" and "vnsought" to the witch's cabin her reply suggests that her progress to this extreme place is the result of the "tempest" of her emotions which has been aroused by love:-

At last turning her feare to foolish wrath,
She askt, what deuill had her thither brought,
And who she was, and what vnwanted path
Had guided her, vnwelcomed, vnsought?
To which the Damzell full of doubtfull thought,
Her mildly answer'd; Beldame be not wroth
With silly Virgin by aduenture brought
Vnto your dwelling, ignorant and loth,
That craue but rowme to rest, while tempest
ouerblo'th.

• • • •

And that vile Hag, all were her whole delight
In mischief, was much moued at so pitteous sight.

And gan recomfort her in her rude wyse,
With womanish compassion of her plaint,
Wiping the teares from her suffused eyes,
And bidding her sit downe, to rest her faint
And wearie limbs a while. She nothing quaint
Nor s'deighfull of so homely fashion,
Sith brought she was now to so hard constraint,
Sate downe vpon the dusty ground anon,
As glad of that small rest, as Bird of tempest gon.

(3.7.8-10)

We may be certain that Florimell's distresses are caused by love, especially after hearing Dony's account of her, (3.5.3-10.) and after having noticed that the stories of Florimell and Britomart are parallel to one another. Therefore, the twice-mentioned image of the tempest is probably calculated to express the turbulence of Florimell's emotions which have been aroused by the tyranny of love. From Britomart's story we are aware of the battleground across which these emotions advance and retreat: indeed, the opposing camps in this "war" are, simple, body and mind.

As long as the stories of Britomart and Florimell are parallel in so many ways, especially in so far as Florimell's Witch's cabin is a kind of Castle Joyous, then it becomes obvious that Florimell's trial in the cabin symbolize the fleshly temptations to lust. It is not surprising that both Britomart and Florimell are described similarly when they are facing their fleshly trials: in both cases, these maidens are reminiscent of Diana. In Castle Joyous, Britomart is associated with Cynthia, and the point is made that her radiance is unmistakeably beneficial:-

As when faire Cynthia, in darkesone night,
Is is a noyous cloud enueloped,
Where she may find the substaunce thin and light,
Breakes forth her siluer beames, and her bright hed
Discouers to the world discomfited. . . (3.1.43.)

Florimell enamates her own kind of radiance as well, and the Witch recognizes it as indicative of chastity:-

Tho gan she gather vp her garments rent,
And her loose lockes to dight in order dew,
With golden wreath and gorgeous ornament;
Whom such whenas the wicked Hag did vew,
She was astonisht at her beauenly hew,
And doubted her to deems an early wight,
But or some Goddesse, or of Dianes crew,
And thought her to adore with humble spright;
T'adore thing so diuine as beauty, were but right.
(3.7.11.)

The two stories are very much similar to one another, for in each case a virgin lady is brought to a place where she must endure a fleshly trial and temptation as a condition of a first phase of her love.

Britomart's trial is conducted in a castle "plaste for pleasure nigh that forrest syde . . ." (3.1.20); it is a castle which conveys the:-

. . . image of superfluous riotize,
Exceeding much the state of meane degree,
(3.1.33.)³⁷

Florimell's place of temptation is, seemingly, quite different since it is a cottage:-

. . . in a gloomy hollow glen . . .
. . . built of stickes and reedes
In homely wize, and wald with sods around,
In which a witch did dwell, in loathly weedes,
And wilfull want, all carelesse of her needes;
(3.7.6.)

But both ladies endure essentially the same temptations to lust, with the major difference being the "face" which is put on these temptations. Britomart is tempted in a palace of pleasure, while Florimell's temptations are far more elementary and less disguised, for Florimell's trials are endured in a place within the forest where there is great danger from "wilful want."

The summer solstice is symbolic of nature's greatest achievement of youthful strength: in the life cycle Florimell's youth makes her vulnerable to the bodily passions, and this condition corresponds with the love cycle which inflicts bodily trials before mental anguish. Hence, the summer solstice may symbolize youthful, passionate strength in human nature; and by the same logic we must therefore expect that Florimell's wintry captivity will symbolize a mental trial. The seasonal allegory suggests that Florimell's cycle begins with her own

37. The most characteristic feature of Castle Joyous is its excessiveness: by so exceeding the state of "meane degree" it symbolizes an excessive venerean nature.

most extreme form of "Castle Joyous" and concludes with her own type of "House of Busyrane," and therefore, it helps to substantiate the parallel between Britomart and Florimell.³⁸

The courtship of Florimell by the Witch's son illustrates another contrast between Castle Joyous and the Witch's cabin, for the Witch's son disguises his lust in the pretty images of nature, just as Malecasta employed art to the same purpose. And in each case the innocence of the maidens confronted with this disguised lust prevents them from recognizing its dangers at first. The hidden dangers accompanying Malecasta's particular kind of pleasure have already been discussed and I have shown that they lurk just below the surface. It is somewhat the same in the witch's cabin where the witch's son offers gifts of a particularly foreboding quality to Florimell:-

. . . many resemblaunces
To her he made, and many kind remembraunces.

Oft from the forrest wildings he did bring,
Whose sides empurpled were with smiling red,
And oft young birds, which he had taught to sing
His mistresse prayes, sweetly caroled,
Girlands of flowres sometimes for her faire hed
He fine would dight; sometimes the squirell wild
He brought to her in bands, as conquered
To be her thrall, his fellow seruant wild;
All which, she of him tooke with countenance
meek and mild.
(3.7.16-17.)

While it is true, as A. A. Jack observes, that these "gifts" are described with the air of "woodland romance" we should never forget that the witch's son is another Corydon, whose similar gifts

38. Britomart's sojourn in Castle Joyous has been shown to take place on the night of the vernal equinox (i.e., Britomart is associated with cosmic balance, and her quest unites land and sea, body and mind, feminine and masculine). But Florimell's analogous stage in the Witch's cabin is more extreme inasmuch as it occurs at the summer solstice.

to Pastorell (6.9.40.) afford a misleading comparison.³⁹ Neither he, nor his mother, nor the very surroundings, in this episode, are analogous to the pastoral world of Corydon and Pastorell, and the difference between the Witch's son and Corydon makes a difference in their gifts. Naturally, both suitors hope to "capture" their lady's love through their wooing presents, but in the case of the Witch's son, this capture has a deeper and darker meaning. His gifts are not just little sparrows abducted from their nests, or wanton squirrels, but animals either dead or "conquered / To be make her (Florimell's thrall . . . " The forest "wildings" sides are "empurpled . . . with smiling red. . . " Surely this image is intended to give the reader cause to wonder at the suitor's intentions. We know these to be guided by base lust (3.7.15.) When we begin to notice that the Witch's son has put a "smiling" face on death, and that his intentions are governed by "brutish lust," (3.7.15.) we surmise that the particular "death" which is implied here must have some relationship with the death threatened by the Foster's boar-spear. Essentially, the greatest difference between the Foster and the Witch's son is not one of degree (for both are base and vile), nor one of intentions (because both are admittedly governed by beastly lust). Instead, the vital difference between them is perceived through Florimell's eyes, for she has become aware of the subjective reality of lust and, as a consequence, her apprehension of it is no longer limited to the objective vision of the Foster, of lust as pure danger. By the time she has reached the witch's house she has found herself tempted by the pleasures which, as a totally innocent maiden, she had not

39. A. A. Jack, Chaucer and Spenser, cited in Variorum Spenser, IV, p. 263.

perceived as a part of lust. And this temptation has caused her see the pleasurable appearances of lust rather than the attending dangers. 40

This stage of Florimell's story depicts not only solar and lunar extremes in nature, but a moral and psychological extreme in human nature, caused by love's tyranny. In Florimell's "spring" the Palfrey and lady were united in their fear of lust because both body and mind knew and feared the dangers of the Foster and his board-spear. But as Florimell continued her journey, the bodily passions began to be influenced by the pleasures of lust, and finally, a split occurred between body and mind, Palfrey and lady. No longer could Florimell trust to the instinct of the Palfrey to flee the pursuing lust; instead, the Palfrey brings her to a place of temptation and deserts her there, constraining youthful and innocent reason to confront not only the dangers, but also the pleasures of lust, for the first time. Since the Palfrey has proved untrustworthy, Florimell must master him. And thus we observe Florimell's departure from the witch's house on these very terms: Florimell has been subjected to the dangers of passion and lust through the Palfrey's weakness, she has sensed its dangers, and has escaped by mastering her passions.

The next stage demonstrates the impossibility of escaping lust by merely avoiding it, and denying that it exists. Florimell, like Britomart, is meant to be a "virgin wife." This is a condition which entails a reconciliation of chastity with sexual pleasure: not the false chastity which Amoret strives to maintain in the sterile house of Busyrane. Therefore, like Britomart, Florimell is destined to

40. The very fact that the Witch's son can court Florimell suggests her new receptiveness to lust. The Foster and Witch's son do not differ in essence, but rather in appearance.

confront the "huge sea of sorrow" and to mourn the fact that her lover's indifference to her leaves her no avenue of escape from the sexual desire which has been aroused within her.⁴¹ She can master the passions for a while, but she can no longer out-distance the lustful temptations which will pursue her in the form of the beast that feeds on women's flesh. No matter how strong and masterful the reason becomes, it cannot remove the flesh from "devouring" temptation. I am implying, then, that the beast represent temptation rather than the actual fact of sexual surrender, and the the devoured Palfrey represents Florimell's "flesh" consumed by passion. It is, therefore, at this point that the most dramatic split occurs between body and mind. Since the body can no longer be trusted, the mind is given no alternative except to be "cast out to sea :" a condition representing the subjection of reason to the material processes of the world.

41. Britomart's lament at the huge sea of sorrow (3.4.8-12.) has a great bearing on Florimell's story, particularly when she is a castaway on the same sea; but also, Florimell's lover Marinell was the personification of the sea's indifference to Britomart in this fourth canto of book three.

iii

The third stage of the seasonal cycle takes places in the episode concerning Florimell's exchange of the land for the sea and it is evident, through several symbolic actions, that the seasonal stage at which we have arrived is symbolic of the autumnal equinox. The actual polarity of the two great elements of land and sea cannot help but recall the situation of the two "hemispheres" (described by Macrobius in his Saturnalia) at the time of the autumnal equinox. And, as Macrobius suggests, the essential equality of the two hemispheres is what is most apparent at this time, for the equinox implies a cosmic balance.⁴² In Florimell's moral and psychological allegory, the equality which is arrived at when the land and sea stand poised as two equally dangerous opposites in the world, is an equality which threatens her with death and destruction. The land has become the place of fleshly lusts, and it offers only death; yet as long as the sea remains massively indifferent, it must also offer "death". The sea, however, symbolizes mental trials and anguish, and therefore Florimell is faced with the choice of either staying on the land and submitting to lust, or fleeing into the sea and dying as the result of a wasteful and artificial chastity resulting from the reason's denial of the flesh. Since Florimell is destined, like Britomart, Amoret, and perhaps Belphebe, to become a chaste wife, either kind of extreme is dangerous to her: she would incur a kind of death were she either to submit to this lust or withdraw into a false chastity. Hence, land and sea are equally dangerous to her. And yet, the underworld of the sea is capable

42. Macrobius, Saturnalia, trans. Davies, I.21.1-27., pp. 141-146; and Fowler, Numbers, pp. 138-139.

of mollifying its strength to the extent that it may become marginally safer for Florimell than the land. This resembles the shift in balance between Macrobius' hemispheres, when the inferior hemisphere receives the "dying" Adonis and holds him for six months.

Aside from the obvious balance and shift of these cosmic elements - appropriate to the autumnal equinox - there is the matter of the Witch's beast which feeds on women's flesh. Although I willingly grant that the beast, and even the dichotomy of land and sea, are calculated to serve other than seasonal allegories, it is difficult to avoid the suggestion of the "boar" which is so involved with Adonis' story. The Palfrey's death, which was caused by the beast, must therefore recall the "death" which waited upon the head of the Foster's boar-spear, and also, the death of Adonis himself. The beast is a reminder of the boar which murdered Adonis and brought on the seasons appropriate to the lower hemisphere. That he murders the Palfrey at the very moment when Florimell is at last able to escape both lust and death by finding the Fisher's boat, must be meant as a reminder of the seasonal mythology.

Finally, the seasonal allegory is made apparent by the figure of the "wintry Proteus", who comes to save Florimell from the Fisher, and who conveys her to her most extreme trial in the depths of the sea. The figure of Proteus need not be restricted only to "winter," but he should also be seen as a symbol of the six month wintry period occurring from the time of the autumnal equinox to the time of the vernal equinox. Of course, as with all the other seasonal figures or symbols, Proteus serves other levels of allegory.

It is worth while to begin a discussion of the third stage of

Florimell's story by recalling how she left the second stage, for we encounter the immediate suggestion of a change in season:-

But past awhile, when she fit season saw
 To leaue that desert mansion, she cast
 In secret wize her selfe thence to withdraw. . .
 Her wearie Palfrey closely, as she might,
 Now well recovered after long repast,
 In his proud furnitures she freshly dight,
 His late miswandred wayes now to remeasure right.
 (3.7.18.)

Florimell now possesses the strength to master the Palfrey and guide him toward the sea, instead of away from it; since the time of the solstice is now passed, the sun's course naturally progresses daily closer to the inferior hemisphere. Florimell's departure from the Witch's cabin causes the Witch to summon the "hideous beast" which devours the Palfrey. This beast perhaps anticipates the later conception of the Blatant Beast (6.12.1ff.) since it is described as "The Monster swift as word." Perhaps also, we are meant to recognize the monster as a kind of slander which Florimell's sojourn with the base Witch and her son has earned her.⁴³ Whatever kinds of things the beast may represent he is certainly associated with lust, especially with a "consuming" kind of lust:-

Eftsoones out of her hidden caue she cald
 And hideous beast, of horrible aspect,
 That could the stoutest courage haue appald;
 Monstrous mishapt, and all his backe was spect
 With thousand spots of colours queint elect,
 Thereto so swift, that it all beasts did pas:
 Like neuer yet did liuing eye detect;
 But likest it to an Hyena was,
 That feeds on womens flesh, as others feede on gras.

43. Florimell and Amoret are comparable figures. Both pass through the same kind of love cycle, and endure fleshly and mental trials. But their experiences are opposite to one another in one special sense: Amoret endures mental trials before fleshly ones; Florimell suffers fleshly trials before mental anguish. The difference between those two polarized experiences of love results from the kind of lover each lady has: Amoret's lover besieges her with affection and passion; Florimell's treats her with indifference. In respect to the assertion that Florimell and Amoret are comparable, see: (3.7.18-29; 3.8.20-35.) and (4.7.20-25.).

It forth she cald, and gaue it streight in charge,
 Through ticke and thin her pursew space,
 Ne once to stay to rest, or breath at large,
 Till her he had attained, and brought in place,
 Or quite deuourd her beauties scornefull grace.
 The Monster swift as word, that from her went,
 Went forth in hast, and did her footing trace.
 So sure and swiftly, through his perfect sent,
 And passing speede, that shortly he her ouerhent.
 (3.7.22-3.)

At this point the beast is surely some kind of consuming passion or lust which comes as the natural result of Florimell's confrontation with the witch and her son. But instead of labelling the beast simply as "lust", it would seem better to see him as the temptation to lust, for he is able to catch up with Florimell and devour the Palfrey without actually wounding the lady. That is to say, that lust may consume the body and still remain powerless to "devour" the reason. Hence, on the psychological level Florimell's exchange of land for sea, and the Palfrey for the sea-dungeon, marks her decision to forsake the bodily passions which cannot be trusted, and to choose, instead, the reason of the mind. When the monster devours the Palfrey, we are not to suppose that Florimell has consummated her desires and lost her maidenhead. More realistically, we are meant to see that Florimell is now forced to discard her trust in the instincts of the body, and to adopt reason as the guide and only sure defence of her chastity: the exchange is so vital so Spenser, and Renaissance psychology in general, that it is described in the cosmic terms of the shifting of an equinoctial balance symbolized by the exchange of land for sea.

The allegory of the beast functions generally on the level of psychological and moral reality, and is not particularly seasonal in detail. The beast could far more easily represent slander, lust or temptation, than the coming of "winter" in the form of the boar.

But the seasonal allegory is concerned with a certain main lines rather than with detail, so that as long as the specifics do not contradict the main line theory, then it is possible to retain it. My seasonal argument is simply that the beast consumes the Palfrey (formerly symbolic of the sun) at a time when two great hemispheres are being exchanged in the seasonal manner. Beyond that, I am perfectly willing to admit that the beast and Palfrey might symbolize other things. It seems particularly likely that the beast represents Florimell's own awareness of the pleasures of lust which were introduced to her with all of the trappings of "woodland romance," and it is for this reason that the beast cannot be escaped.

The shifting "balance" of land and sea is demonstrated by the fact that, at first, both elements portend her death, though in different ways. Behind her is the "tyrant" beast which threatens the death of lust, and ahead of her is the actual death from drowning:-

And now she gan approach to the sea shore,
 As it befell, that she could flie no more,
 But yield her selfe to spoile of greedinesse.
 Lightly she leaped, as a wight forlore,
 From her dull horse, in desperate distresse,
 And to her feet betooke her doubtfull sicknesse.

. . .

For in the sea to drowne her selfe she fond,
 Rather then of the tyrant to be caught. . .
 (3.7.25-6.)

But at the last possible moment, the sea offers her sanctuary by allowing her the "mean" safety of the fisher's boat.

The term "tyrant" associated with the beast could recall Glauce's statement about the "tyranny of love" (3.2.40.) or it could refer to Cupid and even to Busyrane. This is perhaps a good time to note that Britomart and Florimell are distinguished from Amoret and

Belphoebe by different kinds of "tyrants". Since Britomart and Florimell are both engaged in pursuing lovers who are indifferent to them, the "tyrant" of masculine lust is not likely to assail them too greatly; on the other hand, both Belphoebe and Amoret are pursued by ardent lovers, and they are, therefore, likely to find masculine lust a problem. We do not see this developed in Belphoebe's case, but it is quite evident in Amoret's where the tyrant Busyrane represents, in part, Amoret's misconceptions of love, which have been caused by her lover's great passion.

Therefore, Florimell's chase is not likely to end on the land where she will be subjected to the mastery of lust. Instead, she is bound to find a "safetie. . . at sea, which she found not at land. ." (3.7.27) although this new-found safety will be relatively short-lived. Psychologically, when Florimell deserts the consumed passions in preference for her reason, she is "all at sea." Since her reason is thus dissociated from the body, the image of the drifting boat is just right. Britomart had previously complained about the huge indifference of the sea, and her complaint was directed against her lover whose indifference had caused her mind to become analogous to that "complaint" acted out by Florimell, whose "feeble barke it tossed long,/Far from hoped haven of reliefe. . ." (3.4.8.). Even Britomart's prayer to the God of winds seems to have been granted to Florimell for:-

. . . being fled into the fishers bote,
 For refuge from the Monsters crueltie,
 Long so she on the mightie maine did flote,
 And with the tide droue forward careleslie;
 For th'aire was milde, and cleared was the skie,
 And all his winds Dan Aeolus did keepe,
 From stirring vp their stormy enmitie. (3.8.21)

The mind, thus rejecting the body, is suddenly cast away and remains "detached" for a short period of time. But the reason of the mind cannot remain unscathed in love any more than the body, and soon the last vestige of the land, the Fisher, awakens to threaten Florimell once more. His "rape" is, at best, figurative. Otherwise Spenser's frequent references to Florimell's chastity after this episode would be pointless and furthermore, the interpretation thusfar implies that the exchange of land for sea removes her specifically from the danger of fleshly lust. I cannot agree that there is a case for saying that Florimell is actually raped by the Fisher, for it is abundantly clear that God loves chastity that he intervenes by sending Proteus to save the maiden:-

See how the heauens of voluntary grace,
And soueraine fauor towards chastity,
Doe succour send to her distressed cace:
So much high God doth innocence embrace. (3.8.29)

And it is clear that the Fisher has failed in his attempt:-

. . . streight did he hayle
The greedy villein from his hoped pray
Of which he now did very litle fayle. (3.8.31.)

But though he "did very litle fayle," the emphasis is on the word "fayle," and, therefore, it seems improbable that Florimell has lost her maidenhead at this time, as Hamilton argues in The Structure of Allegory.⁴⁴ Furthermore, the loss of maidenhead would render the whole remaining trial in Proteus' dungeon pointless, not to mention the later wedding of Florimell and Marinell.

Just as Spenser began his third stage of Florimell's story with

44. Hamilton, Structure of Allegory, p. 150.

a reference to "fit season," so he now concludes it with the figure of the wintry Proteus:-

An aged sire with head all froxy hore,
And sprinckled frost vpon his deawy beard (3.8.30)

Thus we are reminded of the seasonal context which structures the whole story. Florimell is rescued by the wintry Proteus and taken beneath the waves, but the sea-god's words do not warm her heart. She is about to "die" by entering a sterile period of trial. Her "winter" has come:-

For her faint heart was with frozen cold,
Benumbd so inly, that her wits nigh fayld,
And all her senses with abashment quite were quayld.
(3.8.34)

Instead of having submitted to lust, she is entering a false kind of chastity which is forced upon her by her desire to love Marinell as a chaste wife; his indifference provides her with no outlet for her love. She therefore allows her heart to freeze, and her mind to resist the passions which besiege her, until the time when Marinell will consent to love her. This false chastity is meant to contrast with Amoret's false chastity, which is caused for the exactly opposite reason that she fears the lust of the lover.

Proteus' abduction of Florimell leaves little doubt about the season into which she is descending:-

Her vp botwixt his rugged hands he reard,
And with his froxy lips full softly kist,
Whiles the cold ysickles from the rough beard,
Dropped adowne vpon her yvory brost. . . (3.8.35.)

But, Florimell will descend into the wintry period by stages, as is proper in the seasonal allegory: in other words, she is not suddenly conveyed to the greatest extreme of the "winter solstice."

We notice that she is tempted "daily" (3.8.39.) until the time is right for her to be imprisoned in the dungeon.

There are a number of details which should be mentioned with respect to seasonal and other allegories: particularly the creation of the False Florimell and the loss of the cestus. The loss of the cestus is cited as evidence by Hamilton that Florimell's "rape" at sea is actual rather than figurative, the whole point being that the cestus represents the state of virginity which is cast off when the lady transgresses by succumbing to lust in the Fisher's boat. Rather than symbolizing the loss of maidenhead the cestus is better seen as one kind of protection or defence against lust. Its loss implies that Florimell has cast off the defence of innocence-- which I believe the cestus to specifically represent-- which guarded her chastity while she was young, and for as long as horse and rider, body and mind, could remain together with each half of the duality working instinctively for the good of the other. But once the Palfrey can no longer escape lust, and the lady is forced to proceed on foot, (like Guyon whose loss of Brigadore forced him to tread with equal steps according to the right rule of reason) a new kind of defence is needed. The new defence is simply the defence of will and reason to resist lust, and when Florimell has learned this she will regain the cestus, symbolic of a new innocence in marriage.

Hamilton's theory is flawed by the later references to Florimell's virginity, by her strength to resist Proteus, by her later marriage, and even by the narration during the "rape" which clearly emphasizes the fact that the Fisher failed in his attempt. On the other hand, Hamilton is right to see sexual images such as the smearing of Florimell's

frock with fish scales, and perhaps the line "Haue care, I pray, to guide the cock-bote well. . ." (3.8.24.).

But in view of the inconsistencies which I have mentioned, he is forced to argue that certain other events correspond with this rape, and that the weight of evidence which they provide is enough to tip the scales in his favor. These other events are the death of the Palfrey by the witch's monster, and the loss of the cestus. His argument that the cestus symbolizes the state of virginity is credible if we accept his emphasis on the literal meaning of stanza (5.3.28.). It would seem that according to this stanza, and the stanza (4.5.3.), the cestus may be worn only by virgins. This, at least, is Hamilton's inference:-

The tearing and loss of her 'broken girdle' (3.8.2.) is the loss of her maidenhead. Spenser's similes suggest this significance, but later it is spelled out when we learn that this girdle while tied about the loins preserves chastity: That girdle gaue the vertue of chaste loue, And wiuehood true, to all that did it beare; But whosoeuer contrarie doth proue, Might not the same about her middle weare, But it would loose, or else a sunder teare. (4.5.3.) (The interpretation is later repeated: "vnlesse that she were continent and chaste,/. . . it would lose or breake" (5.3.28.)). This loss of maidenhead is dramatically expressed in the Monster feeding upon her milk-white Palfrey: the monster which feeds upon woman's flesh feeds upon her horse, which is her body according to traditional Renaissance symbolism. ⁴⁵

I would agree that the cestus "preserves chastity," but it does not necessarily follow that its loss means that the chastity of the maiden has been sacrificed; instead, its loss suggests that Florimell is now

without an instinctive defence against lust. She must now use reason instead of instinct. It is worth noting that Florimell loses the cestus in flight; it does not fall off of its own free will as it does when worn by the ladies of the tournament.

Spenser's conception of chaste married love involves a cycle of change from the state of innocence to the state of maturity, which is accompanied by a shift away from the guidance of natural, bodily instincts, to the new guidance of reason and mind. The loss of cestus merely marks the moment that Florimell makes the transition from passion to reason. While she was innocent of lust (to the extent that she knew its dangers but was not yet tempted by its pleasures) she naturally depended on the Palfrey, the body, whose instincts served her own rational fears. But once she found lust attractive, as it seemed from the romantic presents offered her by the witch's son, the natural instinct of the body began to fail, and the split widened between body and mind. Florimell left the Witch's cabin, we recall, because her reason sensed, but was not altogether sure of, the danger of that place. And when she left she mastered the Palfrey, which indicated that reason was then beginning to assert its mastery over the body. Yet the body could not be trusted, even when mastered by reason, to avoid the temptations of lust which had been latent in Florimell, herself, ever since her trial in the Witch's cabin. These temptations to lust are embodied in the monster who devours the Palfrey. At the same time the cestus is torn and lost. But, the maiden makes the transition from land to sea, and even finds the calm weather for which Britomart had prayed to the god of winds. With the body consumed with lust, she has abandoned it, and has symbolically cast off what was once the

surest defence of her chastity: the instinctive trust in the bodily passions.

I have dwelt on this at some length because it seemd to me to be vastly important to get the symbolism of this transitional stage just right, and to see that the exchange of land and sea, the death of the Palfrey, the "rape" in the Fisher's boat, and the loss of the cestus, are calculated to symbolize the transitional stage when youth gives way to maturity, passion to reason. This is a mid-point of Florimell's development, not the final stage of marriage.

When I began discussing these "minor" points I suggested that there was a seasonal allegory attached to the loss of the cestus. The death of the Palfrey by the Witch's monster shadows the sun's (Adonis') death, at the autumnal equinox. Florimell, as the beauty of seasonal nature, vanishes from the superior hemisphere of the land, and leaves behind her the cestus which is a reminder of her beauty in a world now subjected to a long wintry period. The cestus was interpreted as defence or restraint against lust, which was appropriate to Florimell's innocence. In the seasonal allegory the cestus is still a symbol of "restraint" in the sense that, in the wintry period the only thing left from the beauty of spring and summer is the potential and promise of beauty's return to the world: hence, beauty leaves its potential behind, and this potential is essentially in the form of restrained vegetation. The deciduous trees shed their beauty in the autumn and remain an image of sterile restraint throughout the winter until they, like Florimell, are reborn in the spring. Thus is the cestus an image of one essential condition of seasonal beauty: dormancy and restraint. This seasonal

interpretation explains the creation of the False Florimell at this time, and her own relationship to the cestus of Florimell.

The False Florimell represents a false image of the true Florimell, and therefore she must represent false feminine nature, (perhaps false reason) and, naturally, false beauty. The falsehood of her feminine nature is predicated upon the fact that she is created from a "sprite", and is, therefore, non-productive of seasonal life however incontinent and unchaste she may happen to be. In short, as an artificial creation, she is sterile. The cestus will not cling to her for this reason, as for the reasons of her lasciviousness.

But perhaps the significance of false beauty is meant to be given the most emphasis here, for the False Florimell is always engaged in contests for her supposed beauty, from the moment of her creation. False Florimell is able to provide a kind of beauty which is sought after, but she cannot provide the true beauty of the feminine nature because she is a counterfeit. Morally, then, Spenser may be saying that women can be falsely beautiful because their beauty is not founded upon the generation of life, and of more beauty. But it must also follow that if Florimell represents the seasonal beauty of the world which vanished from the land, at the time of the autumnal equinox, then the False Florimell must represent a counterfeit beauty which lasts from this time until the return of the true beauty of Florimell. The False Florimell is therefore a false beauty of "winter" which is based on excess, and false complexions and colors. The cestus reminds us that the true beauty of nature is spring anathema to this. We shall let Spenser's derisive summation of the False Florimell's beauty stand as proof that her beauty is entirely feigned:-

As guilefull Goldsmith that by secret skill,
 With golden foyle doth finely ouer spread
 Some baser metall, which commend he will
 Vnto the vulgar for good gold insted,
 He much more goodly glosse thereon doth shed,
 To hide his falshood, then if it were trew:
 So hard, this Idole was to be ared,
 That Florimell her selfe in all mens vew
 She seem'd to passe: so forged things do fairest⁴⁶
 shew. (4.5.15)

The seasonal significance is fairly clear once we pay heed to the
 False Florimell's substance which is of "snow":-

The substance, whereof she the bodie made
 Was purest snow in massie mould congeald. . . (3.8.6.)

and to the time of her creation which is after the autumnal equinox.
 Finally she will vanish and "melt" when she is placed beside the true
 Florimell at the return of spring:

Then did he set her by that snowy one
 Like the true saint beside the image set,
 Of both their beauties to make paragone,
 And triall, whether should the honor get.
 Streight way so soone as both together met,
 Th'enchanted Damzell vanisht into nought:
 Her snowy substance melted as with heat,
 Ne of that goodly hew remayned ought,
 But th'emptie girdle, which about her wast was
 wrought. (5.3.24.)

This event can be shown to occur in spring, for the marriage
 of Florimell is heralded with the imagery of vegetational revival in
 (4.12.34-5) and is fairly explicit in the stanza which prefaces the wedding
 celebrations:-

After long stormes and tempests ouerblowne,
 The sunne at length his ioyous face doth cleare:

46. The false beauty of False Florimell is obviously analogous to
 the sterile beauty of the Bower of Bliss. This stanza recalls,
 once again, the artificial foliage in the Bower (esp. 2.12.61.).

So when as fortune all her spight hath showne,
Some blisfull houres at last must needes appeare;
Else should afflicted wights oftymes despeire.
So comes it now to Florimell by tourne,
After long sorrowes suffered whyleare,
In which captiu'd she many moneths did mourne,
To tast of ioy, and to wont pleasures to retourne.
(5.3.1.)

iv

In a seasonal allegory which depends on the equal way of nature it is only just to expect that the opposing means and extremes of the great cycle be described with some reference to one another: thus, the first and third stages of Florimell's quest - vernal and autumnal equinoxes - might share a common imagery, or be related to one another in some way so that the reader would know that these phases are meant to be analogous to one another. There does not seem to be very much to link these episodes, with the possible exception of the Foster and the Fisher. The names, and the characters themselves, are perhaps related to one another. First of all, the names Foster and Fisher are alike in appearance, sound and structure. Without knowing either of the characters one would sense a kind of relationship between them simply on the evidence of the "look" and "sound" of the names. But even more important, of course, is the fact that both characters are rude, vile and lustful. Furthermore, both threaten Florimell with a kind of death through lust, and both fail to conquer her. And finally, each character is a hunter who chooses either the land or the sea as his hunting ground. The Foster rides a "tyreling iade" of a horse and carries a sharp boar spear; the Fisher employs a "cock-bote" equipt with nets. There is surely no question about the fact that the Foster and Fisher represent sexual lust, but obviously they must work in different spheres, and appeal to different impulses: the Foster's spear is suited to one thing, and the Fisher's nets to another. I would suggest that the Foster and Fisher attack body and mind, respectively, so that it is

true to say that Florimell's fear of her bodily passions has chased her into the temporary sanctuary of the mind where she totally renounces the body. But the Fisher represents, unfortunately, the latent force of lust which will awaken in the mind and virtually force her to submit to the will of the flesh. In this way the two natural "means" of spring and autumn are also associated with one another, for just as the two equinoxes begin different races upon opposing hemispheres, so the Foster and Fisher begin Florimell's different trials on land and sea.

The evidence of a seasonal relationship between these episodes is rather scanty owing to the fact that Spenser's first episode is meant to convey more valuable information about Florimell's nature, and is therefore less concerned with the kind of imagery appropriate to a strictly seasonal allegory. But unfortunately, Spenser was quite explicit in his comparison between the extremes of Florimell's cycle. He had warned us to look for an extreme which would be balanced against the Witch's cabin when he said of Florimell:-

Need teacheth her this lesson hard and rare,
That fortune all in equall launce doth sway,
And mortall miseries doth make her play. (3.7.4.)

The same fortune which brings her to the witch's cabin will convey her to the sterile sea-captivity. The relationship between these opposite extremes is revealed by the nature of the differences between them. Aside from the fact that both episodes depict a kind of captivity and trial, the comparisons between them yield a consistent pattern of dissimilarity: especially in the way that each episode seems to be precisely the opposite of the other. The Witch's cabin is an extreme of the land, while Proteus' dungeon is an extreme of the sea; the brightness and light of the Witch's

cabin contrasts with the darkness of the sea dungeon; the rude, youthful Witch's son contrasts with the power and majesty of the old sea-god. These, and other matters which I shall discuss, make it certain beyond doubt that the Witch's cabin and the sea-captivity are opposing extremes.

Before entering into a detailed discussion of the sea-captivity and its relationship with the Witch's cabin episode, I would like to attempt an answer to the above-stated question. So far I have suggested that the seasonal allegory depends on the four solar divisions of the year which account for the cycle of seasons from spring to winter. I am convinced that Spenser constructs his allegory according to these main lines; but it has also been apparent that Florimell's cycle differs in some way from the solar pattern. And it is this alteration which may well account for the continued journey of Florimell after the Palfrey's sudden stop at the summer solstice, as well as the one extra month of captivity in the six-month wintry season. The problem may be solved if one turns again to Macrobius:-

The three cycles of heavenly light also occur according to this number (seven), the great, the intermediate, and the small cycles. The great cycle is the annual one by the sun; the intermediate is the monthly one by the moon; and the small is the daily one by the rising and setting of the sun. Each of the three cycles has four divisions, and thus the number seven appears in the three cycles and the four divisions of each. These are the four parts: the first damp, the second hot, the third dry, and the last cold. In the great cycle of the year the spring is damp, the summer hot, the autumn dry, and the winter cold. The intermediate cycle of the month is so regulated by the moon

that the first hebdomad ⁴⁷ is damp, because the new moon regularly brings moisture; the second, in which the moon waxes to take on a likeness of the sun, is hot; the third is dry, being farther removed from the first; and the fourth is cold as the moon's light fades out. The third cycle, of dawn and sunset, is so arranged that the first quarter of the day is damp, the second hot, the third dry, and the fourth cold. ⁴⁸

One notices how Macrobius associates the lunar with the solar cycle, demonstrating that each lunar hebdomad corresponds with a solar stage, and that the seasonal foundation of damp, heat, dry and cold is applicable to both cycles. I think it fair to say that Macrobius implies that the "intermediate" and "small" cycles are determined along the same lines as the "great" yearly cycle of seasons: the lunar cycle is therefore analogous to the sun's cycle.

Spenser probably had something of this sort in mind when he decided to make Florimell's "chase" symbolic of the lunar "chase" after the sun, for indeed, Florimell's phases are closely allied with the sun's (she passes through the usual seasons) but are at the same time wholly individual.

The theory which can best explain Florimell's progress through the seasons is one which assumes that she depicts a lunar cycle. In the first place, her association with light at the time, or near the time which I have called a solstitial extreme, may well suggest the full moon: a phase analogous to the sun's summer solstice. Her total darkness in her wintry captivity in Proteus' dungeon would

47. "In the first hebdomad it (the moon) waxes to the appearance of a halved orb, and is then called half-moon; in the second hebdomad, by gathering its replenished fires it attains the full orb and is called full moon; in the third hebdomad it becomes halved again, when it wanes to the mid-point; in the last its light fades until it vanishes completely." Dream of Scipio, trans. Stahl, I.6.54, p. 111.

48. Macrobius, Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, trans. Stahl. I.6.54-61., pp. 111-112.

also be appropriate to the fourth hebdomad, which is analogous to the sun's winter solstice. These images might, therefore, be intended to make Florimell's lunar role more apparent so that the reasons behind her variance from the solar pattern might also be apparent. The moon's sidereal year lasts approximately one month longer than the solar year: the last, or thirteenth month, is often described as the time when the moon tries to catch up with the sun. When the Palfrey stops at the summer solstice, then, Florimell's continued journey to the stage analogous to her "solstitial" period suggests the "lag" which has already occurred between hers and the sun's cycle. While the sun has achieved its extreme, Florimell's lunar cycle still has some little distance to go before she, too, may stop and rest. And, by the time she has reached the "wintry" captivity she has fallen even a greater distance behind the sun, so that when spring is about to begin in cantos eleven and twelve of book four, Florimell complains that she has been held a captive long past her time, and that she has been imprisoned for seven rather than six months. The troublesome extra month is the thirteenth month of the lunar cycle which, strictly speaking, is accumulated over the whole cycle and not just within the six-month "wintry" period. I believe that Florimell's journey on foot to the Witch's cabin demonstrates that the moon is beginning to "lag" behind the sun, but at the same time, Spenser must have felt that the extra month could add more meaning to all levels of his allegory if it were applied only to the wintry captivity. This is an inconsistency, of course, for the fact that the moon's sidereal year is thirteen

months cannot be translated into a year consisting of six "superior" seasons and seven "inferior" ones. Naturally, each month of the year absorbs a small amount of time until the extra month is accounted for, but the extra month which evolves over the period of the year cannot be saved up and added to one particular season as Spenser does. The number seven was simply needed to symbolize a mortal captivity, and this is the reason for its use.

There are several reasons for associating Florimell with the lunar cycle. We have already seen her association with the number seven: a number which is commonly symbolic of fleshly mutability by its symbolic relations with the moon.⁴⁹ Florimell's significance is an image of the feminine nature is surely appropriate here. Even more important, perhaps, is the fact that Spenser relates Florimell to the lunar Britomart. The two love stories are similar in many ways, not least of which is the underlying Venus - Adonis symbolism which has seasonal applications. While this is so it is possible to argue that Britomart's lunar role, revealed beyond doubt in Isis Church, may be applied to Florimell whose love seems to parallel Britomart's in so many ways. And finally, not only does Florimell endure a seven month captivity, but her year takes thirteen months to complete, and her story covers twenty-seven cantos.⁵⁰ Add to this the imagery of light in the Witch's cabin, and darkness in Proteus' dungeon, suggestive of the full and new moons, and the possibility of Florimell's lunar ride must seem probable.

Alastair Fowler has offered an explanation for the troublesome

49. Macrobius, Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, trans. Stahl 1.6.48-49., pp. 109-110.

50. The sidereal lunar year is 328 days; the sidereal lunar period is 27 days 8 hours. See: Fowler, Numbers, pp. 90-94 for a discussion of the application of period figures with stanza counts.

seven months of wintry captivity associated with Florimell, and he bases his conclusions on the same sections from the Dream of Scipio as seemed appropriate to cite as proof of Florimell's lunar role.

It is my opinion that Fowler does not entirely answer the question of why Florimell is imprisoned for seven months (which is inconsistent with the verifiable cycle of the moon, as I have shown) though he does suggest an astrological reason for the employment of the number seven within a seasonal allegory which depends on the sun's yearly cycle. According to Fowler, Macrobius' statement, regarding the sun's alterations with regard to the number seven, demonstrates a precedent for associating the number seven with the greater seasons from equinox to equinox, and from solstice to solstice. Macrobius says:-

The sun, too, upon which everything depends for life, varies its course in the seventh sign: it reaches the summer solstice in the seventh sign after leaving the winter solstice and reaches the autumn equinox in the seventh sign after leaving the spring equinox. ⁵¹

Fowler's interpretation stresses that the alteration of the sun in the seventh zodiacal sign may account for the association of the number seven with Florimell's trial. ⁵² However, while one may readily accept this as a possibility, it still does not answer the problem of Florimell's captivity of a full seven months.

Florimell's association with the lunar cycle does not answer all inconsistencies, even as the employment of solar seasonal allegory cannot absolve these episodes of all problems. However, the lunar cycle does provide us with a weight of evidence which must surely

51. Macrobius, Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, trans. Stahl, 1.6.57., p. 111.

52. Fowler, Numbers, pp. 138-139.

be acceptable as an explanation of Florimell's individual cycle. Fowler, in particular, has made us aware of the solar and lunar patterns of the Faerie Queen, and it seems that the Marinell and Florimell story is another example of this kind of allegory. The allegory is simply intended to place Florimell's love story within a cosmic context, which is suggested by the very dichotomy of land and sea associated with the story from the beginning. Florimell is like the moon which chases after the sun, as Macrobius explains.⁵³ The union of sun and moon, achieved after various stages and trials which are seasonal in character, allows spring and fruitfulness to return to the world. Most important, however, is the general context within which Florimell's cycle functions, for as Macrobius suggests, the lunar cycle conforms with the great cycle of the sun by passing through its analogous stages. The same is true of love, so that we may suggest, on the moral and psychological levels of allegory, that the progress of Florimell in love is a journey along a cycle consisting of means and extremes which may be called equinoctial or solstitial. Therefore, it seems proper to continue calling Florimell's stages by solar means since they are associated with one another. Florimell's extreme wintry captivity is, therefore, her winter solstice just as her stay in the Witch's cabin was her summer solstice. There is no doubt that both of these places are extremes in Florimell's cycle, nor that they oppose one another; but also I shall prove that both contain hidden arguments which place them within the context of the sun's cycle to the extent that both suggest the extremes of the solstices.

53. Macrobius, Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, trans. Stahl, 1.6.50, p. 110.

Florimell's detention in the sea-dungeon is therefore a cosmic extreme analogous to the winter solstice, though specifically comparable to the fourth lunar phase. The episode contrasts with the Witch's cabin which represents its cosmic opposite. And since these episodes are opposite in cosmic terms, they are also opposite in psychological terms, for the witch's cabin tempted the flesh, and the sea captivity attacks the mind. Literally, of course, these episodes contrast with one another simply by marking "high" and "low" points within the love cycle, for in the Witch's cabin Florimell was tempted by lust, and in the dungeon she is purged of her temptations to the kind of lust offered in the Witch's cabin. Finally, the cycle nears completion as Florimell's detention reaches the extreme point where her love must be accepted, or she must die. Her lowest point is, therefore, the farthest extreme of her sufferings, and she finds release through Marinell's love.

Marinell's heart must be softened by Florimell. There is a great deal of symbolism involving the principles of tetradic harmony and concord in these stanzas, as I shall demonstrate, and the seasonal allegory could easily be overlooked as a result. But Spenser is careful to remind us of the importance of the seasonal cycle when he re-phrases an earlier sentiment from the Witch's cabin episode. In the beginning of Florimell's trial in the Witch's cabin Spenser had cautioned us to expect another kind of extreme somehow opposite in nature to the one which Florimell was about to encounter (3.7.4.). Here, in the sea-dungeon, Florimell has found that expected extreme, and in response she utters the wish that heaven would heed her trials since she is

sure that heaven has an "equall eare," though the extremity of her case makes her suspect that heaven is "farre from hearing of (her) . . . heauy plight . . . " (4.12.6.). Florimell complains of is the inequality of the heavens at this moment. She is therefore praying for equity to release her, and it is possible that Spenser is hinting at the greatest image of equity in all of nature: the equinox:-

It is clear that this symbolism of the equinox draws together many of the themes of the book. In the first place, the equinox is a supreme cosmic example of Equity. The 'like race' of the luminaries (i.e., sun and moon) is run, we are told, in equal justice. 54

The equinox should establish a harmony capable of bringing the "luminaries" together as Fowler demonstrates, for the races of sun and moon are equal at the equinox in the sense that day and night are equal. Florimell's condition is very extreme and she mentions the equality of the heavens, nonetheless, in the hope that they may hear her and effect her release. Since her lunar cycle has lagged behind the sun's, her "solstitial" extreme occurs some time after the sun has already reached the winter solstice, and has begun to ascend toward the equinox. This is the case here, for although Florimell complains of the extremity of her trials, yet Marinell has come to meet her, and the very nea suggests (by its formal marriage and its increased fecundity) the return of spring. Indeed, Florimell's most extreme trial occurs very near the time of the vernal equinox when she will find release through Marinell's concern.

Florimell's captivity in Proteus' dungeon is altogether different

from her stay in the Witch's cabin. The Witch's cabin was an extreme of the land, this is an extreme of the sea; in the Witch's cabin Florimell was associated with the sun's light, demonstrating that the sun was still nearby; here, there is no light at all, showing that the sun has completely forsaken her. In Proteus' dungeon:-

. . . did this lucklesse mayd seuen months abide,
 Ne euer euening saw, ne mornings ray,
 Ne euer from the day the night descride,
 But thought it all one night, that did no houres diuide.
 (4.11.4.)

This is Florimell's "wintry" captivity, made more extreme by the lag between herself and her sun which has accounted for her darkness, and for the extra month of her captivity. Her "light" is an "accident", as the Witch's son reminds us, and it is derived from the "substance" of the sun itself.

Florimell's complaint that she is hold past her time must, therefore, be taken as an important hint at the seasonal allegory. She laments her alteration from the sun's cycle which has heaped an extra month of trial upon her:

Ye Gods of seas, if any Gods at all
 Haue care of right, or ruth of wretches wrong,
 By one or other way me woofull thrall,
 Deliuer hence out of this dungeon strong,
 In which I daily dying am too long. (4.12.9.) 55

Florimell must either find acceptance of her love in Marinell or else die, and seasonally, she complains that her wintry "death" is too long and that each day is an unjust addition to her trials. She recognizes that her seven-month trial is too long a period to suffer, and she makes oblique reference to it here.

55. Italics mine.

There are a few incidental reminders to the Witch's cabin in this episode, and one very important one. We have already mentioned Marinell's association with Florimell's Palfrey, and it is extremely important to recognize this symbolism. The Palfrey had been associated with the sun, as was Marinell by his Adonis-like imagery, and now shortly before the return of spring, we observe not only the "uniting" of Marinell and Florimell, sun and moon, as is appropriate to the equality of these luminaries at the equinox, but also, we see Marinell transformed into a horse. This is a new horse, one which Florimell will be able to trust in marriage:-

Thus whilst his stony heart with tender ruth
 Was toucht, and mighty courage mollifide,
 Dame Venus somme that tameth stubborne youth
 With iron him, and maketh him abide,
 Till like a victor on his backe he ride,
 Into his mouth his maystring bridle threw,
 That made him stoupe, till he did him bestride:
 Then gan he make him tread his steps anew,
 And learne to loue, by learning louers paines to rew.
 (4.12.13.)

Not only is there an echo of the line "His late miswandred wayes now to remeasure right," (3.7.18.) which was applied to Florimell's Palfrey, but we are told that Cupid has mastered Marinell, and we may clearly see that the sun-like Marinell has been associated with the sun-like Palfrey through the force of love. We may be reminded of Cupid's ordering of elements in Spenser's Hymne to Love:-

He (Love) then them tooke (four elements), and
 tempering goodly well
 Their contrary dislikes with loued meanes,
 Did place them all in order, and compell
 To keepe them selues within their sundrie raines,
 Together linkt with Adamantine chaines . . .
 So euer since they firmly haue remained,
 And duly well obserued his beheast . . . (H.L. 11. 85ff.)

Love has the power of creating form out of Chaos, and keeping the world eternally seasonal. It is therefore proper that Marinell is forced into line - and, indeed, is associated with the sun-like Palfrey - by this one force which has the power to deal with the sun and moon. Even the "loued means" of Cupid will be seen to be important to the story of Marinell and Florimell on a philosophical level. It is sufficient to note that this episode holds many reference to "means" and that the establishment of these means involves a complex relationship between opposites.

Perhaps another reminder of the Witch's cabin is to be recognized in the analogy of Marinell to a Hynde:-

Like as an Hynde whose calfe is falne vnwares . . .
(4.12.17.)

The appropriate reference introducing the Witch's cabin episode is:-

Like as an Hynd forth singled from the heard . .
(3.7.1.)

The discovery of another "echo" from a former episode which has already been shown to be related by several similarities, and significant dissimilarities, must only add conviction to the argument that the Witch's cabin and the wintry captivity are meant to contrast meaningfully with one another.

So far I have emphasized the cosmic balance (of extremes) which is in evidence. The summer and winter are clearly these extremes, with the qualification that Florimell's wintry confinement has lasted past the time of the actual winter solstice owing to her lag behind the sun. But there is a psychological balance which is suggested here as well. I have associated Florimell's trials with

the love quest of Britomart, and have seen certain similarities between the Witch's cabin and Castle Joyous in the process. . It is inevitable, then, that one should continue the analogy by suggesting that Florimell's seven month captivity - reminiscent of Amoret's seven month captivity - represent her own particular trial in the mind. Castle Joyous and the House of Busyrane contrast with one another as body and mind; the Witch's cabin and Proteus' dungeon are completely analogous in the sense that they also represent a dualism of body and mind: and one which has been casued by armed love's entry, one is tempted to say, into Alma's parlor.

It is clear that Spenser wanted the stories of Amoret and Florimell to be considered as parallel in some ways, for in the beginning of book four he mentions both ladies:-

Of buers sad calamities of old,
Full many piteous stories doe remaine,
But none more piteous euer was ytold,
Then that of Amorets hart-binding chaine,
And this of Florimels vnworthie paine . . . (4.1.1.)

And it is here, as well, that we are told that Amoret's captivity lasted seven months; the information can hardly be ignored with reference to Florimell's like period of captivity.

And yet, there are differences between the trials of Amoret and Florimell: the House of Busyrane is richly constructed with its rooms full of tapestries, masques, and graven statues; Florimell's place of captivity is a dungeon with no light, and with only one room. It is as sterile and barren as the House of Busyrane is rich, and cluttered with erotic suggestions. And finally, the House and

dungeon as placed in different "hemispheres:" the one being on land, and the other deep within the sea.

There is one basic similarity, however, which makes all the dissimilarities meaningful: both Florimell and Amoret are brought to the place of trial by the force of love. In Amoret's case, the lover is ardent and "over-bold." His passion assaults her, causes fears to arise within the mind, and hence, the fears take on the shape of Busyrane; a distorted picture of the lover, Scudamour, himself who would sacrifice Amoret's virginity to the greater fertility of marriage. All of the House of Busyrane reflects the ardency of Amoret's passion which has been aroused by her persistent lover. Scudamour has fanned the flames by his passion which has allowed Amoret no time to reconcile what she must lose in marriage with what she will gain.

Obviously, this is one very serious kind of love- problem; but it has very little to do with the love stories of Britomart and Florimell who are faced with precisely the opposite kind of situation: the indifference of their lovers. This basic distinction accounts for the different kinds of mental trial which are evident in the stories of Amoret and Florimell. Amoret's House of Busyrane is a reflection of the confusion which has grown from within her mind as a reaction to her lover's unremitting passion. Florimell's captivity expresses the trial of enduring the total indifference of her lover. Amoret fights against submitting to the monster she imagines her husband to be, and all her strength is bent toward avoiding the passion she finds attractive, though deadly-seeming

because of its oppressive masculine force. Florimell also fights against the attractions of lust, but of indiscriminate lust. Her anguish is caused by the circumstance that has aroused her passion, but has provided her with no outlet for it except through indiscriminate love. Naturally, she rejects this outlet, but to do so is to reject all of the fleshly desires and to seek refuge in a false chastity formed from the total abstention from passion. Amoret is enflamed by passion because her lover daily lays seige to the castle; Florimell is kept entirely sterile because no lover comes to offer her a virtuous release, so she rejects all passion choosing to die rather than be untrue to the knight she would choose in marriage. Amoret's place of trial is affected by the body, and indeed, by the fires which rage on the "porch", and which send the smoke and sulphur throughout the House. Florimell's dungeon is virtually cut off from the body, for there are no flames, no sensual tapestries, no masques, no light of love or otherwise. Florimell has managed to dissociate mind from body and to remain chaste and beyond the reach of fleshly passion. Her chastity is unapproachable, and her resistance is beyond reproach.

The figures of Busyrane and Proteus are also contrasting kinds of mental fantasies. Busyrane is an enchanter who has evolved from Amoret's fears in love, and he is fixed in the mind, and not subject to alteration. But Proteus is a god of change and his outward appearance is always changing, or subject to change. Amoret has her lover and she knows the passion which is mastering her and therefore her captor has a fixed image in her mind. But Florimell has not seen her lover, and all she knows is that he is a rich sea-knight whose wealth is the material wealth of the sea, and whose power consists

of his association with the ever changing, formless, chaos of the sea. As Busyrane was the distorted image of Scudamour, so Proteus is in one sense, the distorted image of Marinell. He is changeable and seemingly formless because it is this quality which Florimell knows is a part of Marinell's strength. He is wintry and indifferent to her virtue and love because Marinell is indifferent, and his indifference brings her "wintry" trial upon her. Britomart is related to both of these trials, though it is clearly apparent that she has more in common with Florimell's mental trial than with Amoret's. Still, her contact with passion which was gained in Castle Joyous allows, her to liberate Amoret because she has gained the mastery over lust and passion which makes her capable of a successful confrontation with the "enchanter". And, perhaps, we are meant to recognize Florimell's trials as somewhat analogous to Britomart's inner sufferings. However well she may restore the balance of Amoret's mind, her accomplishment is still the result of a confrontation with a problem which is not specifically dangerous to her. Artegall does not assault her with passion, he remains, instead, as indifferent to her as the sea, or as Marinell is to Florimell. Britomart's trial is, therefore, comparable not to Amoret's but to Florimell's.

Before concluding this section it would be in order to return to the seasonal argument, and to the comparison of the Witch's cabin and Proteus' dungeon. There is a remarkable similarity between them which, in view of all else, can only support the argument that these episodes are comparable opposites.

The general structure of these episodes is precisely similar in the sense that both encompass a like number of stanzas. Florimell is forced to dismount and proceed on foot in (3.7.3.), and she regains

her horse in (3.7.18.). The episode is thus contained within sixteen stanzas, emphatically bounded by Florimell's own amazement at her Palfrey's sudden and unexpected stop, and by the resumption of her quest which brings the episode to a close. In the later episode in Proteus' dungeon the story begins in (4.12.3.) when Marinell is introduced to us again, and concludes very obviously and emphatically in stanza (4.12.18.), taking a total of sixteen stanzas altogether. Not only do these episodes consist of an identical number of stanzas, but the sixteen stanzas of each episode cover the same ordinal numbers of the stanzas themselves, being the third through eighteenth stanzas in each case. This correspondence may hint at a numerological argument.

Kent Heatt has demonstrated that in Spenser's Epithalamion the poet marked the division of the hours of light from the hours of darkness at the summer solstice by changing his refrain at the sixteenth stanza. Thus, in the twenty-four hours of the wedding day, celebrated on the day of the summer solstice, there are sixteen hours of daylight and eight hours of darkness. Should it be improbable, then, that in a story concerned with solstitial extremes the poet would make a numerical reference to the hours of light and darkness at the solstices? Florimell's darkness is a total darkness during her trial, but even so, the numerical reference to the sun's wintry extreme cannot help but clarify Florimell's fourth lunar hebdomad, and contain it within the greater cycle of the sun.

Finally, it is not impossible that Spenser might have "abstracted" a very important feature of the Epithalamion - the indication of daylight and night-time hours - in the fourth book of the Faerie Queene which was published shortly after the Epithalamion. Indeed, the

seasonal argument in the marriage hymn could hardly have been out of his mind while he was writing the fourth book, which concludes with the magnificent marriage of rivers. Nor should one feel that so simple an allegory would be out of character with numerical allegory in general, for Fowler has shown us one very particular case where the whole Epithalamion was, in fact, reduced to the scale of six stanzas and twenty-four lines. Numerical allegory need not be complex.⁵⁶

When Marinell's hard heart is softened, when the "means" are found to bring Florimell and Marinell together - indeed, when the great "mean" of nature, the equinox returns - we find the solstitial extreme vanished away and the warmth of spring returning to the world. Florimell's imprisonment is, like Amoret's, partly a delusion. It is not really the winter solstice at all. Instead, it is suddenly spring again. The maiden is liberated, beauty returns to the world, and the marriage of Marinell and Florimell is only a short time off. Book four closes, therefore, with the imagery of Spring's return:-

Who soone as he beheld that angels face,
Adorn'd with all diuine perfection,
His cheared heart eftsoones away gan chace
Sad death, reuiued with her sweet inspection,
And feeble spirit inly fely refection;
As withered weed through cruell winters tine,
That feeles the warmth of sunny beames reflections,
Liftes vp his head, that did before decline
And gins to spread his leafe before the faire sunshine.
(4.12.34.)

Marinell's revival is associated with the revival of vegetation, a correspondence which is appropriate to the Adonis role he plays, for Adonis, as Equicola, Macrobius, and many others tell us, was associated with the growth of corn.

As Florimell's new "horse," Marinell will provide the strength

56. Alastair Fowler, Triumphal Forms, pp. 13-15 for an example of a 24 line poem which effectively distills the intricate structure of Spenser's Epithalamion.

and vitality of the newly risen sun and of revitalized seasonal vegetation; Florimell will remain the ideal of beauty which springs from such a base, having just emerged from a sterile captivity. And when she, the beauty of all seasonal nature, confronts the false, feigned beauty of winter, she will triumph and all will recognize her. At that later time - the time of her wedding - she will regain the cestus which illustrates her new restraint and new innocence in marriage.

CHAPTER SEVEN: "Book IV, introduction."

There is no artistic unity of any kind to be found in this fourth book. It is as if the poet composed it while under the same reckless mood concerning the shaping of his material as that which held him when he made the third book. In the third book, however, as we have seen, while there is little unity of form the poet's conception of Chastity makes an inner unity, and, in a fashion, keeps the poem together; but the fourth book is a riot of formlessness.¹

When Kate M. Warren pronounced this opinion she was, in one sense at least, attempting to evaluate the Faerie Queene on what she considered to be its own terms. Her approach was simply to admit the "formlessness" and "romantic" disorder, which had formerly been deplored by critics enamored of the "Italianate" principles of unity, and to get on with the business of trying to find something to like in Spenser. In this she echoes the sentiments of Thomas Warton, who had also felt the need to provide an answer to critics who argued Spenser's lack of epic decorum:-

If the Faerie Queene be destitute of that arrangement and economy which epic severity requires, yet we scarcely regret the loss of these, while their place is so amply supplied by something which more powerfully attracts us: something which engages the affections, the feelings of the heart, rather than the cold approbation of the head. If there be any poem whose graces please, because they are situated beyond the reach of art, and where the force and faculties of creative imagination delight, because they are unassisted and unrestrained by those of deliberate judgement, it is this. In reading Spenser, if the critic is not satisfied, yet the reader is transported.²

While one may agree with the laudable attempts to sidestep the issue regarding Spenser's unaccountable lack of epic decorum, one must also

1. Kate M. Warren, "introduction to her edition of Book IV," cited in Variorum Spenser, IV, p. 282.
2. Thomas Warton, Observations on 'The Faerie Queene' of Spenser (1745 ed.) cited in Edmund Spenser, a Penguin Critical Anthology, ed. Alpers, pp. 102-103.

admit that some damage resulted from these efforts. In the first place, it was wrong to assume that the absence of one set of unities meant the absence of all kinds of unities. In admitting to the accusations of the harsher critics, too much was given away. And this leads us to the second point: if "formlessness" and a kind of "romantic" delusion³ is all that we are left with then we must inevitably find some way of glorifying it in order to justify a reading of the Faerie Queene. The result of the discord among critics was the occurrence of a dualist split between the respective champions of reason, on the one hand, and imagination, on the other. Although the claims of the imaginative critics have more innate appeal, it would seem that they did the greater harm. The intellectual critics were certainly mistaken in their assertions that the poem lacked unity, but we must remember that the imaginative critics did not take much convincing before they accepted this false premises. And having accepted it they began to perpetrate a fraud of such proportions that, to this day, it is largely responsible for the fact that the poem is seldom read. Not only did these well meaning critics agree to the belief that the poem was formless, but they began to glorify this alleged formlessness until they had virtually robbed Spenser of any appeal to the intellect.

J. W. Hales's introduction in the Globe Edition of Spenser's Works, of 1869, is a perfect illustration of the consequences of

3. Note Warren's choice of words: ". . . the same reckless mood . . . as that which held him . . ." Surely these words prove the point that Warren considered Spenser's "mood" to be possessing him, as if he were deluded. By delusion, naturally, I mean the kind which was acceptable and even desirable to the romantic temper.

of stressing romantic imagination at the expense of intellect. In this article, which is both well reasoned and intelligent, one finds great stress laid on the "melody" and "rapture" of the poetry before us. One reads continually of "That fine melodiousness, which is one of Spenser's signal characteristics . . ."⁴ and in regard to the Faerie Queene we are told:-

Happily Spenser was true to himself, and went on with his darling work in spite of the strictures of pendency.⁵

Intellect has now become pedantry. Well, of course this is being somewhat unfair to Hales because the kind of intellect he deplored probably was pedantry. But an apt indication of the tone of this article is found in the note which suggests that Spenser, Milton and Wordsworth are all comparable to one another because their self-sufficiency makes them like "little children."⁶ Whether or not this is a valid comment is beside the point. It surely would not have occurred to Ben Johnson to say any such thing about Spenser. The point is, simply, that Hales, and those who agreed with his assessment of Spenser, were most enamored of the "child-like" qualities within the poetry. Generally speaking, then, we are not surprised to find that Hales cites the lines from Spenser's verse which tend to illustrate personal sentiments inclining to poetic rapture. But were a reader to search for "our sage and serious Spenser" by reading Hales, he would search largely in vain. Here is perhaps the most characteristic quotation from this essay:-

He presents a picture such as would have delighted his own fancy, though perhaps the actual experience may not have been unalloyed with pain. It is a picture which in many ways resembles that presented by one of a kindred type of genius, who has already been mentioned as of affinity with him--by Wordsworth.⁷

4. Edmund Spenser, The Globe Edition of the Complete Works of Edmund Spenser, ed., R. Morris with a "Memoir" by J. W. Hales (London: Macmillan and Co., 1869), p. 26.

5. Hales, p. 27.

6. Hales, p. 31.

The harm done by this approach is simply that a reader, brought up to expect a second Wordsworth in Spenser, would never survive the first book of the Faerie Queene. There are many poets that can be approached through a haze of romanticism, but Spenser is not one of them. Hales's enjoyment of Spenser is, therefore, somewhat of a fraud; in the same way that it would be a misrepresentation to persuade someone to read Chapman's Homer on the strength of Keats's sonnet "On First Looking Into Chapman's Homer." It might be excusable for a poet to advocate another poet on "visionary" grounds, but the same kind of approval should not be accorded to the critic.

Kate Warren's frank admission of the formlessness of Spenser's poetry is, therefore, all part of an illfounded tradition which, thankfully, has been challenged by the more recent scholarship involving philosophy and numerology in Spenser. Indeed, it is ironic to think that the re-discovery of numerological order in the Faerie Queene has had the effect of actually restoring one of the unities, (i.e., of time) which were so commonly denied existence in the poem.⁸

But although Spenser must now reclaim his rightful place as a poet of intellect, it is still necessary to point out the dangers of the romantic, or "affective" fallacy since even fairly recent critics are apt to feel, like G. Wilson Knight who admitted he was not "at home here," i.e., in the Faerie Queene as a whole.⁹ His assessment of the Faerie Queene as one "vast Bower of Bliss"¹⁰ is amusing, to say the least; but it is probably not a startling reaction from one whose interest leads him to believe that "Spenser's poem has no active meaning (and)

8. Fowler, Triumphal Forms, pp. 1 - 22.

9. G. Wilson Knight, "The Spenserian Fluidity", The Burning Oracle, cited in Edmund Spenser, A Penguin Critical Anthology, ed. Alpers, p. 228.

10. Knight, Penguin Anthology, ed. Alpers, p. 228.

is not dramatically alive.¹¹

In addition to those readers who cannot feel at home in Spenser there are others, like Yvor Winters, who seem to have fallen by the wayside through some inability to read past the first book.¹²

All of this preamble is by way of saying that we shall be more likely to feel at home with Spenser, and perhaps even manage to read him, if we are more honest in an approach to his poetry. We should admit, as we begin this study of the fourth book, that the poet does not adhere to the most common sorts of epic decorum, but because this is so we are not justified in arguing that our poet excels only in some heightened kind of fancy. The foundations of this poem are not easily discovered but when they are found they appear to be laid down by a man of appreciable intellect. On the one hand, then, Spenser can be admired on the grounds of intellect, and on the other hand, we can agree with the romantic view that he excels in "melody" and "rapture". So long as we admit both sides we stand a better chance of appreciating the poetry of Edmund Spenser.

Let us examine, then, the kind of structure which is found in book four. Again, it is somewhat ironic that Kate Warren was apparently vaguely sensitive to it for she noticed the importance of canto placement:-

The story of Scudamour and Amoret gives Spenser occasion for another one of his finest pieces of work in the description of the Temple of Venus. This occupies almost the same place and proportion in Book IV as the House of Holiness in Book I, and Mercilla's court of Justice in Book V.¹³

Charles Smith also noticed the importance of canto placement when he seemed to paraphrase Warren:-

11. Knight, Penguin Anthology, ed. Alpers, p. 229

12. Yvor Winters, The Function of Criticism, cited in Penguin Anthology, ed. Alpers, pp. 252 - 253. And, Frank Kermode, Shakespeare, Spenser, Donne: Renaissance Essays (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971), p. 12.

13. Kate Warren, cited in Variorum Spenser, IV, p. 287.

Here we have the Temple of Venus, which occupies a place in the book comparable to the position of the House of Holiness in the first book or Mercilla's Court of Justice in the fifth book.¹⁴

Smith must have had Warren in mind for, like her, he neither does anything with this observation, nor seems to care if it leaves a false impression. The false impression is that the tenth cantos, which describe the House of Holiness and the Temple of Venus, can be said to compare with the ninth canto of book V where Mercilla's court is described. What both Smith and Warren lack is the knowledge that the difference of one canto is significant. And even if it were not, they forget to mention the House of Malbecco which shares exactly "the same place and proportion" in book three as the other episodes do within the other books; and such an observation would have been contrary to the spirit of their remarks. So, it is arguable that both of these critics hit upon an important feature of the organisation of the Faerie Queene, although neither was willing to be precise enough about the proportions which exist within the poem as a result of canto placement. It is easier for a current reader to appreciate these patterns of organisation owing to the recent studies which have been done in the field of numerological criticism.

Basically, book four has two structural orders which can be revealed adequately through the study of canto placement. What Warren took to be an intrusion from book three was, as the canto placement clearly demonstrates, an essential feature of the philosophy. The love stories which continue into book four do not, as Warren suggests, cause one to forget the main theme of book four. They tend to amplify it. Book four is meant to be a book of synthesis: love blends with the

14. Charles G. Smith, cited in Variorum Spenser, IV, p. 308

higher love of friendship; feminine blends with masculine; and the canto structure of book three blends with that of book four. Indeed, the most proper metaphor of the relationship between these books is clearly that of "marriage!"

Cantos one, six, eleven and twelve are the stressed cantos of book three, as we have already seen. It is worth noting that Spenser used this same numerical pattern in the Shepheardes Calendar, for on the authority of E.K. we learn that:-

These xij Aeclogues euery where answering to the seasons of the twelue monthes may be well deuided into three formes or ranckes. For eyther they be Plaintiue, as the first, the sixt, the eleuenth, and the twelfth, or recreatiue, such as al those be, which conceiue matter of loue, or commendation of special personages, or Moral . . . (Works, p. 419)

Interestingly enough, we find that the theme of love and femininity is accentuated in these same cantos within the fourth book, thus suggesting that these cantos are meant to represent, or symbolise, the themes of the third book which have begun to effect a synthesis with the themes of book four. Cantos one, six, eleven and twelve consistently recall the stories which began in book three, and not simply that, but, the stories which they relate are all brought to some kind of conclusion.

In canto one of book four we shall examine a detailed summary of Amoret's story which not only retells her adventures faithfully, but anticipates the resolution of her troubles with Scudamour. Thus, in canto one, the story of Amoret and Scudamour is given a prominent place, and the recounting of this tale in the fourth book means, literally, that the substance of the third book has been allowed to transpose itself into the context of book four.

The sixth canto is entirely taken up with the reconciliation of Britomart and Artegall, and once more we find the themes and stories

of the third book being given emphasis in the fourth. Indeed, the sixth canto marks an important place within the book since it is proportionately at the center of the book. Thus, its being allowed to carry the themes of book three to fruition suggests that it serves a useful purpose for the fourth book in general.

Finally, the eleventh and twelfth cantos relate the story of Marinell and Florimell, and with the reconciliation of these lovers we again observe one of the themes of the third book brought to fruition.

In all of these cantos we recognize the themes of the third book being continued and completed; and there is the suggestion that they are meant to recall not only the general themes of the former book, but the specific ones as well. In canto one of book four the account of Amoret and the knight, who is forced to take a love or sleep outside the door, recalls Malecasta's house and her masterful laws which also forced knights to take a love. When Britomart and Artegall become reconciled to one another in canto six of book four, their union portends the generation of a fruitful lineage - as Merlin had predicted. And thus, we are justified in recalling the episode of the fruitful Garden of Adonis in the like-numbered canto of book three, for the fruitfulness of Venus' garden is relevant to the fruitfulness of the Briton maid. And in the eleventh and twelfth cantos of four, the Marinell-Florimell story has been shown to correspond with the imprisonment of Amoret in Busyrane's house in the like-numbered cantos of book three.

The other frame, or structure, is that which we may properly regard as the masculine structure of "friendship" which belongs in the fourth book. There are three stressed cantos which may be so-described: cantos one, three and ten. Thus, the "feminine" structure consists of four cantos and the "masculine" structure is composed of three cantos.

There may be several reasons for this, but surely one of them must have something to do with the mystic number seven which is the sum of these numbers, and which plays such an obvious role throughout books three and four where Amoret and Florimell both undergo seven month imprisonments.

It will be immediately apparent that the "masculine" and "feminine" structures combine in canto one: perhaps a cryptic indication, on Spenser's part, that duality evolved, or was "unfolded" from the One. Hence, it is appropriate to combine masculine and feminine within such a canto. In any case, it is obvious that canto one is a part of the masculine frame because within it we find the description of Ate and Duessa which is to be contrasted with that of Concord and Venus in the tenth canto. Ate, we shall find, is a danger to both masculine and feminine spheres since she threatens friendship and love.

The two other stressed cantos within the masculine frame are both obviously medullar in importance. A considerable portion of this paper will be spent on arguing that friendship was considered a masculine virtue, so that if I presently argue that the dominant theme of friendship in cantos three and ten makes them a part of the masculine context, the reader will understand that I will prove the association which is crucial to my argument at a later time. The friendship theme is apparent in canto three where Cambel and Triamond do battle and end their strife through the mutual accord of friendship. But the friendship theme of the Temple of Venus episode is not as apparent as this. Perhaps one of the most significant theories advanced in this paper is simply that Scudamour's experiences in Venus' Temple reveal his inability to accept friendship in love, and that this

is the immediate cause of all his, and Amoret's, pain. For the time being, I ask the reader to accept, simply on the evidence that friends are seen walking in Venus' garden, that friendship is the accentuated theme of that episode.

The actual canto placement of books three and four is, I believe, of crucial importance. In book three the cantos one, six, eleven and twelve are given the most emphasis--perhaps to correspond with the plaintive quality of the same numbered "aeclogues" in the Shepheardes Calendar. And we have seen how this structure recalls the third book within the fourth book, and by paralleling these with the events of the like numbered cantos in book three. This can only mean that Spenser intended a synthesis of themes, structures and stories within the fourth book. There can be no better refutation of the assertion that the stories of book three intrude where they are not wanted, and obscure the true intentions of the poet.

CHAPTER EIGHT: Book IV, "Friendship"

i

There is no more emphatic indication of the supreme power and force of friendship than the fact that Spenser's book on friendship is the stormiest and most turbulent of all the six completed books of the Faerie Queene. False and "fayned friends" can drag personal and civil relations down to the depths of chaos:-

They breaking forth with rude vnruliment,
From all foure parts of heaune doe rage full sore,
And tosse the deepes, and teare the firmament,
And all the world confound with wide vprore,
As if in stead thereof they Chaos would restore.

(4.9.23.)

But the obverse also applies: true and virtuous friendship has the power to ascend as much toward heaven as false friendship may descend toward hell. Therefore, the true friends of book four achieve a harmony and concord which is so transcendent as to partake of a stable immortality. This, then, is Spenser's main lesson in the book of friendship: true friendship is a condition arising from the spirit of men, unhampered by the usual impediments of the flesh, and therefore capable of fleshly transcendence. Friends love one another as one "soul" loves another "soul", and therefore this love is founded on that which is stable and immutable: the eternal spirit of God.¹ Lovers of the second degree love material beauty and

1. Selincourt's introduction to the standard edition of Spenser's Poetical Works expresses the poet's debt to the Platonic tradition in general (esp. pp. xlv-xlvi). Selincourt was right to stress the inseparability of chastity and friendship, for indeed, the masculine friendship of book 4 infuses the chastity of book 4 with purpose and intellect. Spenser's Platonism led him to recognize love as a spiritual questing after eternal, transcendent beauty: a beauty which masculine friendship was best suited to capture.

therefore value the flesh above the spirit.² This dichotomy of spiritual and fleshly lovers is the product of the Platonic tradition which flourished in the Renaissance and, therefore, it is not surprising that Spenser makes a direct reference to Socrates as he begins his fourth book:-

Which who so list looke backe to former ages,
And call to count the things that then were donne,
Shall find, that all the workes of those wise sages,
And braue exploits which great Heroes wonne,
In loue were either ended or begunne:
Witnesse the father of Philosophie,
Which to his Critias, shaded oft from sunne,
Of loue full manie lessons did apply,
The which these Stoicke censours cannot well deny.

(4. proem 3.)

The love which our poet cites as the initiative to noble action is the love of Socrates for his friend Critias, not the love of man and woman, nor the love of families.

What is anticipated here, is allowed a full "Platonic" treatment in the ninth canto:-

Hard is the doubt, and difficult to deeme,
When all three kinds of loue together meet,
And doe dispart the hart with powre extreme,
Whether shall weigh the balance downe; to weet
The deare affection vnto kindred sweet,
Or raging fire of loue to woman kind,
Or zeale of friends combynd with vertues meet.
But of them all the band of vertuous mind
Me seemes the gentle hart should most assured bind.

For naturall affection soone doth cesse,
And quenched is with Cupids greater flame:
But faithfull friendship doth them both suppress,
And them with maystring discipline doth tame,
Through thoughts aspyring to eternall fame.
For as the soule doth rule the earthly masse,
And all the seruice of the bodie frame,
So loue of soule doth loue of bodie passe,
Ne lesse than perfect gold surmounts the meanest brasse.

(4.9.1-2.)

2. See (4.9.1-2.) and Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier, trans. Sir Thomas Hoby (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1928), pp. 316 ff. I have used the 1966 reprint in the Everyman Library series.

Furthermore, we shall find that these three orders of love are associated with the three orders of "soul"; for indeed, it is precisely this "mystery" which is present in the story of the brothers Priamond, Diamond and Triamond. Natural family love is, like the operation of the vegetable soul, a purely instinctive force and it is easily superceded by the "animal" love of men and women. But the crown of love is that of friendship since, like the rational, or intellectual soul, it aspires to the heavens instead of to the material world. The association which Spenser makes between the three souls and three loves - which I shall discuss later - enables one to recognize that the second degree of love is in a "mean" position between the purely "naturall" love of family, and the intell-ectual and spiritual love of friends. Like the animal soul, the "animal" love will be shown to partake of both extremes so that friendship and family love are both crucial to the happiness of lovers of the second degree.

In the course of this paper I shall discuss the precarious balance between true and false friends, the differences between the three kinds of love, and the analogy to the three orders of soul, and finally, the very apparent influence of Chaucer which exists in this book on friendship.

We have seen how book four is structured in two ways: the "feminine" canto structure of book three, consisting of cantos one, six, eleven and twelve, is absorbed within the "masculine" context of book four, whose own structure consists of cantos one, three and ten (the stressed "masculine" cantos). One could argue that the Venus of the Garden of Adonis is metaphorically transported to the fourth book where her fruitfulness and fecundity, guided by masculine purpose, allows her more power than she had formerly possessed;³ for the absorption of the "feminine" structure by the "masculine" one hints at precisely the same thing: the new union of masculine and feminine, of material generation and spiritual purpose.

This paper will trace the relationships between the two structures of book four, emphasizing that book four's two structures do not create a reader's chaos as some have alleged, but instead, a complete union of the opposites of masculine and feminine, and all they entail. The best place to begin is with the first canto since both of the themes of masculine and feminine seem to be present here.

Canto one is divided into two main parts. The first seventeen stanzas recall the third book by re-introducing the Amoret story, and at stanza eighteen the themes of the fourth book begin to emerge with the appearance of Ate and Duessa. Ate is the "mother of debate" (4.1.19.) whose power threatens all of the degrees of love, but whose

3. See (4.12.1-2.). The sea's fecundity exceeds that of the land: feminine material generation benefits by its contact with masculine spiritual purpose.

greatest malice is discovered in the chaos of false friends. This division within canto one makes it symbolic of the entire union of extremes which occurs in the fourth book.

The canto begins with a direct reference to the stories of book three:-

Of louers sad calamities of old,
Full many piteous stories doe remaine,
But none more piteous euer was ytold,
Then that of Amorets hart-binding chaine,
And this of Florimels vnworthie paine:

(4.1.1.)

And it is Amoret's story, in particular, which continues up until stanza seventeen. This continuation is both a summary of the story and an anticipation of its conclusion. The castle whose custom was

. . . that hee
Which had no loue nor lemman there in store,
Should either winne him one, or lye without the dore . . .

(4.1.9.)

is reminiscent of Castle Joyous from the first canto of book three, which retained a similar custom:-

. . . There dwelleth here
Within this castle wall a Ladie faire,
Whose soueraine beautie hath no liuing pere,
Thereto so bounteous and so debonaire,
That neuer any mote with her compaire.
She hath ordaind this law, which we approue,
That euery knight, which doth this way repaire,
In case he haue no Ladie, nor no loue,
Shall doe vnto her seruice neuer to remoue.

But if he haue a Ladie or a Loue,
Then must he her forgoe with foule defame,
Or else with vs by dint of sword approue,
That she is fairer, then our fairest Dame.

(3.1.26-7.)

But ultimately the episode may seem to recall two other episodes of importance to Amoret. Looking ahead we may find a reference to

Scudamour's story in canto ten of book four. In this story we are told of the knight's attempt to take Amoret as his "right" in love. A knight's failure on such an adventure does, indeed, constrain him to "lie without the door." We see several knights "without the door" in the account of Scudamour's courtship:-

On th'one side he (Doubt), on th'other sate Delay
 Behinde the gate, that none her might espy
 Whose manner was all passengers to stay,
 And entertaine with her occasions sly,
 Through which some lost great hope vnheedily,
 Which neuer they recouer might againe;
 And others quite excluded forth, did ly
 Long languishing there in vnpyttied paine,
 And seeking often entraunce, afterwards in vaine.

(4.10.13.)

Generally, the attempt to associate Scudamour and his story with the brash, though valiant, knight of canto one, is justifiable on the grounds that both seem to think of love as a battle, and Amoret as the spoils of war. However traditional this may be, the repetition of this theme with respect to Amoret can only be meant to remind us of certain aspects of the actual courtship by Scudamour himself. Scudamour, we recall, is the knight who is too bold in love; his boldness, which leads him to believe that his need is his justification, is the sole characteristic of the knight from canto one:-⁴

Amongst the rest there was a iolly knight,
 Who being asked for his loue, auow'd
 That fairest Amoret was his by right,
 And offred that to iustifie alowd.

(4.1.10.)

In a sense, the knight may be said to be Scudamour's boldness,

4. The account of Scudamour's over-bold courtship is found in canto 10 of book 4. The lover's boldness gives rise to Amoret's deluded thoughts in cantos 11 and 12 of book 3.

personified.

The second reference, in this story of the knight who must "lie without the door," also applies to Scudamour: in particular, to his "doom" to languish before the flames of Busyrane's house (3.11.8-26.). Indeed, the account of a brash knight whose love provokes him to attack Britomart [i.e., chastity] before either he, or Amoret, know her true features is obviously meant to be a figurative account of the courtship itself. When Scudamour declared his love he also declared a war on chastity - with the same ill-attacks that are symbolized in the young knight's attacks on Britomart. This warfare led both him and Amoret into confusion because although marriage entails the loss of virginity, it does not require the total loss of chastity. Therefore, Scudamour was wrong to attack chastity (Britomart) before knowing her true nature. The reconciliation of Amoret and Scudamour is anticipated by Britomart's capability to step between the knight and the lady, to knit all parties together through her own true chastity which she has interposed as a "mean," and to reveal herself at last as capable of according these opposites in marriage:-

She that no lesse was courteous then stout,
Cast how to salve, that both the custome showne
Were kept, and yet that Knight not locked out,
That seem'd full hard t'accord two things so far in dout.

The Seneschall was cal'd to deeme the right,
Whom she requir'd, that first fayre Amoret
Might be to her allow'd, as to a Knight,
That did her win and free from challenge set:
Which straight to her was yeelded without let.
Then since that strange Knights loue from him was quitted,
She claim'd that to her selfe, as Ladies det,
He as a Knight might iustly be admitted;
So none should be out shut, sith all of loues were fitted.

(4.1.11-12.)

As soon as Scudamour and Amoret learn to love the chastity that

Britomart represents, they will find themselves accorded in mutual love. And naturally, since chastity has revealed itself as capable of resolving these extremes, it is inevitable that Britomart herself should be revealed to the assemblage. Thus it is that her own revelation follows hard upon her establishment of concord:-

With that her glistring helmet she unlaced;
Which doft, her golden lockes, that were vp bound
Still in a knot, vnto her heeles downe traced,
And like a silken veile in compasse round
About her backe and all her bodies wound:
Like as the shining skie in summers night,
What time the dayes with scroching heat abound,
Is creasted all with lines of firie light,
That it prodigious seemes in common peoples sight.

(4.1.13.)

Some, of course, are bound to doubt the vision of chastity which they see before them, but the lover-knight knows her power and is happy to show his gratitude:-

But that young Knight, which through her gentle deed
Was to that goodly fellowship restor'd,
Ten thousand thankes did yeeld her for her meed,
And doubly ouercommen, her ador'd . . .

(4.1.15.)

Britomart's role as a "mean" between Amoret and her young knight is a figurative account of the kind of reconciliation required between these lovers; it is also a figurative reminder of the role of Britomart in the House of Busyrane. When she stepped into the house she placed herself as a "mean" between the ardent lover and the distraught maiden (3.11.25ff.). Later on, in the third room of that house, she threw herself between the vile enchanter and the maiden (3.12.33.). Her continual efforts to establish herself as a "mean" offer us proof that Busyrane is an image of Scudamour, the powerful masterful lover who has become distorted in Amoret's mind. For the role of chastity is to mediate between the lover and the

beloved in precisely the same way as Britomart does in the opening stanzas of canto one; and therefore, her mediation between Busyrane and Amoret must signify the power of chastity being interposed between Amoret and the mistaken image of masculine power patterned on Scudamour's boldness. Busyrane cannot be destroyed, as Amoret knows, but he can be bound with his same "heart binding chain." Correspondingly, Scudamour's masculine power cannot be destroyed, but must rather be brought within safe limits by the one force which is capable of sustaining his wound without perishing. Indeed, Britomart's wound by Busyrane's hand corresponds to her self-revelation in the beginning stanzas of book four since in the former episode her whole power is revealed by her capability to survive the intended sacrifice. Just as she cannot be fully known until she has resolved the "two things so far in doubt" (4.1.11.) and has accorded Amoret and the "knight," so, also, the full potential of chastity is unknown until the very moment when the masculine power of Busyrane modulates to its highest pitch of destruction. When Britomart successfully absorbs the wound which would have killed Amoret, we are suddenly aware of her full power. And so is Amoret, as we gather from the immediate alteration in the House of Busyrane.

This little story which tells of Amoret and the unknown knight is, therefore, both an anticipation of the married accord of Amoret and Scudamour, and a recollection of the events described in the Busyrane House episode. Insofar as this is true it would seem that these seventeen stanzas of canto one are mainly concerned with the feminine love themes of book three. Certainly we see other reminders of that book as well when we look carefully at this story. The castle's custom is an echo of Malecasta's law

from the like-numbered canto of book three.⁵ Perhaps the reminder of the palace of pleasure, which had been the place of chastity's first trial, is appropriate when we are shown the figurative account of the triumph of chastity; for Britomart's success in the House of Busyrane depended upon her success in Castle Joyous, and therefore, the two trials are related. The accord of a knight and lady in marriage is necessarily a harmonious balance of pleasure and pain: the two prime features of Castle Joyous and the House of Busyrane.

Certainly, book four begins more in the vein of book three by giving more emphasis to the feminine love theme, than to the masculine themes of friendship.

With the introduction of Ate and Duessa, however, the masculine themes begin to be revealed. The first descriptions of Ate suggest a complete change in subject and tone:-

Her name was Ate, mother of debate,
And all dissention, which doth dayly grow
Amongst fraile men, that many a publike state
And many a priuate oft doth ouerthrow.
Her false Duessa who full well did know,
To be most fit to trouble noble knights,
Which hunt for honor, raised from below,
Out of the dwellings of the damned sprights,
Where she in darknes wastes her cursed daies and nights.

Hard by the gates of hell her dwelling is,
There whereas all the plagues and harmes abound,
Which punish wicked men, that walke amisse:
It is a darksome delue farre vnder ground,
With thrones and barren brakes enuironed round,
That none the same may easily out win;
Yet many waies to enter may be found,
But none to issue forth when one is in:
For discord harder is to end then to begin.

5. The like-numbered cantos of books 3 and 4 are often comparable. Even those minor cantos which fall outside of the masculine or feminine structural frames are often significantly similar to one another: we shall discuss the relationship between cantos 7 in books 3 and 4, as an example.

. . .

So much her malice did her might surpas,
That euen th'Almightie selfe she did maligne,
Because to man so mercifull he was,
And vnto all his creatures so benigne,
Sith she her selfe was of his grace indigne:
For all this worlds faire workmanship she tride,
Vnto his last confusion to bring,
And that great golden chaine quite to diuide,
With which it blessed Concord hath together tide.

(4.1.19, 20, 30.)

Ate is the principal evil force of the fourth book and it is clear that she is a threat to masculine friendship. Her influence is continually felt through the warring "friends" whose strife threatens not simply the civil, but the universal order as well. Since friendship is the most important kind of love it is natural for Ate to hate it the most. And, of course, her preoccupation with friendship is expected in a book devoted to this kind of love. It is also important to notice that Ate's power is not limited, and that she treatens all of the loves, as the monuments of her house show:-

And eke of priuate persons many moe,
That were too long a worke to count them all;
Some of sworne friends, that did their faith forgoe;
Some of borne brethren, prov'd vnnaturall;
Some of deare louers, foes perpetuall:

(4.1.24.)

These three kinds of love are especially vulnerable to Ate's attacks.

It is apparent from these and other stanzas that Ate is the "opposite" of Dame Concord from Venus' temple in canto ten. Of Ate we know that:-

. . . all her studie was and all her thought,
How she might ouerthrow the things that Concord wrought.

(4.1.29.)

The contrast between Ate and Concord provides the two "poles"

of this book. Those influenced by Ate tend toward hellish discord and an instability which would restore chaos; those who serve Concord strive toward harmony through the fruitful management of material and formal essences. And since the battle rages throughout the three degrees of love, the comparative stability or instability generated by either Concord or Ate, respectively, will differ according to the kind of love affected. The stability of family love is desirable, but at the same time it is entirely dependent on the other two loves. And even if it were not, it would have to give way to them, eventually, out of necessity. The stability which exists in family love is pretty well restricted to the family group, itself, and it could almost be said that it generates nothing beyond itself. In like manner, the instability of family love affects, primarily, the family involved and no one else. There are bound to be exceptions but as a general rule family love cannot be held to be of the most crucial importance to the world in the same way that Cupid's love, or the love of friends can.

For from Cupid's love, which we expect to replace family love, (4.9.2.), we obtain the first important kind of stability: the fleshly, and material stability of lineage. Obviously, lineage is important to the world and therefore Ate's attempts to frustrate the second kind of love are easily an attempt to restore Chaos. And, therefore, Concord's support of this love suggests her role as a creator whose works entirely replace and oppose chaos by managing material "lineage."

Finally, in friendship we find an even more important kind of stability which concord supports and Ate hates. We recall that Ate threatens even "th'Almightie" because of His love for man, and his "grace." In opposing friendship Ate opposes God's love and grace

since friendship is a spiritual love which partakes of eternity. The stability of friendship is beyond this world, although Concord may support it, and Ate threaten it. It is naturally in this sphere that the battle between Ate and Concord is most intense.

Although we have noticed a hierarchy of the three kinds of love we shall find that Spenser regards the loves as closely dependent and that he contrives to unite them. No one love should be given a solitary victory in this world, just as no individual order of "soul" could be expected to function without the lesser ones. Unlike Chaucer, who saw that the power of Cupid's love could destroy other kinds, Spenser shows that all three loves are best united with one another.⁶ His legend of friendship, for example, leads from Cupid's love to the establishment of friendship; the Knight's Tale leads from Cupid's love to the destruction of friendship, notwithstanding Arcite's gentlesse which is forced upon him by cruel fortune and necessity.

In the first canto, where Ate's power is revealed, we find a false tetradic harmony fashioned from Blandamour, Ate, Duessa, and Paridell.⁷ Primarily, the formation of this false harmony rests upon the false friendship of the two knights. But it is also apparent

6. The major difference between Spenser and Chaucer on the subject of love is expressed simply by the differences between a Renaissance Platonic tradition of love and the Courtly love conventions of the Middle Ages. Chaucer continually explored heterosexual love conventions, believing them supreme in importance to mankind; Spenser approaches love from the more transcendental perspective which accords masculine friendship the highest honors.
7. The doctrine of tetradic harmony is a part of an ancient tradition. The doctrine was transmitted to the Middle Ages through Macrobius' Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, trans. Stahl, I.6.22-3, pp. 104-106.

that this friendship has grown out of the false mediation of the ladies Ate and Duessa who are the knights' companions. And therefore, since each knight "loves" one of these ladies it is fairly obvious that the tetrad encompasses more than one of the three loves.

Blandamour, Ate, Duessa, and Paridell form a tetrad of:-

INCONSTANCY: DISCORD: : FAITHLESSNESS: FALSEHOOD

Ate and Duessa are the "means" of this tetrad, and their significances as Discord and Faithlessness are fully noted in canto one (expecially stanzas 19 and 32):-

Her name was Ate, mother of debate,
And all dissention . . .

Her mate (Duessa's) he was a iollie youthfull knight,
That bore great sway in armes and chivalrie,
And was indeed a man of mickle might:
His name was Blandamour, that did descrie
His fickle mind full of inconstancie.
And now himselfe he fitted had right well,
With two companions of like qualitie,
Faithless Duessa, and false Paridell,
That whether were more false, full hard it is to tell.

While it is true that Duessa is often called simply "false" instead of "faithless" as she is here (as for example, in 4.1.19.), the authorial comment would seem to indicate that her role here is more one of faithlessness. Of course the line between faithlessness and falsehood is a thin one so that Duessa's previously established significance of "duplicity" need not be disturbed.

This false tetrad contrasts with the virtuous tetrad of Cambel: Cambina: Canacee: Triamond from canto three. In the first place the false one seems to rely on only two of the three loves - omitting family love - while the virtuous one includes all the three degrees. And secondly, the "means" and "extremes" will be found to be vastly different from those of the false harmony.

For the moment let us observe the function of the false tetrad. When Blandamour attacks Britomart we recognize the attack of

inconstancy on Amoret's new protector, chastity (Britomart). Although the attack is thrown off, the confrontation cannot be without its consequences. Amoret will fall into the clutches of a kind of lust which might well be associated with Blandamour's kind of inconstancy:

Which when Blandamour, whose fancie light
Was alwaies flitting as the wauering wind,
After each beautie, that appeard in sight,
Beheld, eftsoones it prickt his wanton mind
With sting of lust, that reasons eye did blind . . .

(4.2.5.)

Amoret has yet to learn how to reconcile chastity with love, and inconstancy is one particularly important temptation she must meet and conquer. Later on, when the figure of lust snatches her away we shall note, especially, that she is taken in the midst of her pleasure and enjoyment of a forest.⁸

Similarly, Paridell's attack on Scudamour represents the attack of falsehood; particularly, the dissemination of false words which damage Amoret's reputation and give rise to the lover's jealousy. Again, the attack is rebuffed, but the confrontation means that Scudamour's sojourn in the House of Care is inevitable.

Thus, in two cases (each dealing with the Amoret-Scudamour story) we see the false friends threatening love by sowing Ate's seeds of dissention. We have seen these "seeds" described in stanza twenty-five:-

Such was her house within, but all without,
The barren ground was full of wicked weedes,
Which she her selfe had sowed all about,
Now greown great, at first of little seedes,
The seedes of euill wordes, and factious deedes;

8. Again, as with the Castle Joyous and the Witch's cabin episodes, forests seem dangerous to maidens in love: see (4.7.4.).

Which when to ripenesse due they grown arre,
 Bring foorth an infinite increase, that breeds
 Tumultuous trouble and contentious iarre,
 The which most often end in bloudshed and in warre.

(4.1.25.)

The first canto, then, begins with the figurative account of the Amoret story and anticipates the resolution of these lovers by the force of chaste married love. The canto continues with the introduction of Ate and Duessa and it is here that the themes of the masculine book begin to assert themselves. Ate threatens masculine friendship, primarily, inasmuch as it is the highest of all the three loves. Therefore, we find that the instruments of her hatred happen to be the false friends Paridell and Blandamour. However, Ate's power is not restricted to any one level of love, but can range freely across the entire spectrum and when we see that power put to the test, it is with respect to the second degree of love: the love of Scudamour and Amoret. The prevalence of the Amoret story suggests the extent to which the themes of the third book will be absorbed in the fourth.

There is one more thing which deserves mention. The canto begins entirely from the feminine point of view, with the Amoret story, but concludes from the masculine point of view, with Scudamour's first stirrings of jealousy. Perhaps it is merely coincidental that the first canto shifts from a feminine to a masculine perspective; if it is a coincidence it is a happy one in a canto which already looks like a microcosm of book four as the result of its capability to absorb and synthesize themes from the previous book with those of its own.

CHAPTER NINE: "Friendship in Conflict with Love;
Some Themes from Chaucer".

i

The division of subject matter which we found in the first canto is repeated in the second. The canto begins with a continuation of the Ate story, but breaks off to introduce the Cambel-Triamond story which continues through canto three. At stanza thirty-two, where this "break" occurs, we find the famous invocation to Chaucer:-

Dan Chaucer, well of English vndefuled,
On Fames eternall beadroll worthie to be fyled.

(4.2.32.)

For, it is from Chaucer that Spenser derived much of his material for the Cambel-Triamond episode. Spenser's story is a continuation of the "Squire's Tale," but the poet's interests were not restricted to any one poem in the works of Chaucer, as other clear references show. We shall find very significant parallels to this story in the "Knight's Tale," for example; and furthermore, we should be aware of the paraphrase from the "Franklin's Tale" which has been repeated twice: the first time in (3.1.25.) and the second time, falsely, by Duessa in (4.1.46.). The theme of "mastery" in love was especially well taken by Spenser who, it seems has built an entire philosophical schema around the precepts laid down, finally, in the "Franklin's Tale".

In the first part of the canto, then, the Ate story continues to teach us to anticipate the chaotic strife of canto nine. Ate's hatred is supported by Duessa and False Florimell and the result is

supported by Duessa and False Florimell and the result is the outbreak of strife between Paridell and Blandamour:-

As when two warlike Brigandines¹ at sea,
 With murderous weapons arm'd to cruell fight,
 Doe meete together on the watry lea,
 Tjey stemme ech other with so fell despight,
 That with the shooke of their owne heedlesse might,
 Their wooden ribs are shaken nigh a sonder;
 They which from shore behold the dreadfull sight
 Of flashing fire, and heare the ordenance thonder,
 Do greatly stand amaz'd at such vnwonted wonder.

(4.2.16.)

It is this same strife which is magnified later on, and which elicits this comment:-

Such mortall malice, wonder was to see
 In friends profest, and so great outrage donne:
 But sooth is said, and tride in each degree,
 Faint friends when they fall out, most cruell fomen bee.

(4.9.27.)

The description of the strife of Paridell and Blandamour in the earlier canto anticipates the cosmic imagery developed in the later battles. Ate's strife will become more widespread until the world itself - symbolized by images of oceanic and stormy turbulence - seems threatened:-

But they so farre from peace or patience were,
 That all at once at him gan fiercoly flie . . .

Like to a storme, which houers vnder skie
 Long here and there, and round about doth stie,
 At length breakes downe in raine, and haile, and sleet,
 First from one coast, till noght thereof be drie;
 And then another, till that likewise fleet;
 And so from side to side till all the world it weet.

(4.9.33.)

1. Paridell and Blandamour are compared with pirate vessels, just as they are comaprable to actual brigands: false friends are outlaws in society.

In the light of this we recognize that the immense ceremony in the ocean, which concludes book four, is meant as a cosmic refutation of Ate's power. Against this vast order the strife of canto nine looks ineffectual.

When Spenser begins to introduce the Cambel-Triamond story with the invocation to Chaucer, we sense a complete change of perspective, for we are about to begin a story which illustrates all of the virtues opposed by Ate. Spenser's debt to the "Squire's Tale" is obvious, but it is the "Knight's Tale" which more closely resembles the Cambel-Triamond story in respect to both the major themes, and certain details of description. The story of the conflict of the three kinds of love, with special reference to the love of friends, and with a cosmic battle within the "lists," was obviously attractive to Spenser when he wrote his book on friendship. For we shall find that the lists in the Cambel-Triamond story operate on the same symbolic plane as those described in the "Knight's Tale," and further, we shall see that Spenser accepts the theme of conflict among the three degrees of love, although he appears to have solved the problem and removed the outcome of his "tale" from the kind of tragic incident which occurs in the conclusion to the "Knight's Tale."² Edgar Wind³ is probably right to remark on Spenser's unfortunate pedantry in this episode, but one must recall that the poet made a special invocation to the one English poet he

2. Again, Spenser's Platonism enables him to argue that friendship is the highest love, and to accept friendship is to accept all of the loves in harmony with one another. Love is the crown of knighthood and friendship is the crown of love.

3. Edgar Wind, Pagan Mysteries, pp. 209-211.

admired more than any other: surely he would not have done so if he had not been proud of what was to follow. Wind may very well object to the obviousness of the "mystery" which Spenser relates, but it must be true that Spenser thought his efforts worthy even of Chaucer. Perhaps he did not feel that he was rivalling the lyricism of Chaucer at his best, but instead, that he was solving a philosophical dilemma in a way that Chaucer might have approved.

In the "Knight's Tale" the "lists" are symbolic of the world. They are large, circular and regular according to order and degree:-

. . . swich a noble theatre as it was,
I dar wel seyen in this world ther nas.
The circuit a myle was aboute,
Walled of stoon, and dyched al withoute.
Round was the shap, and in manere of compas,
Ful of degrees, the heighte of sixty pas,
That whan a man was set on o degree,
He letted nat his felawe for to see.

(K.T. 1885-92.)⁴

Chaucer clearly draws our attention to the fact that this is an extraordinary theater. Its huge size and regularity, as well as its being in "manere of compas," contribute to its cosmic analogy. It is common to find various types of worlds framed within the civilizing confines of a wall or barrier, as in the Roman de la Rose with its enclosed garden of Mirth.⁵ The ominous personifications of this garden (Hate, Poverty, etc.) are placed on the outside of the wall to indicate that they have no place, and no existence, within the springtime garden of love. But Chaucer's personifications

4. All references to Chaucer will cite: Geoffrey Chaucer, The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F.N. Robinson, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1957). I have used the 1961 reprint.

5. Romaunt of the Rose, Chaucer, Works, ed. Robinson, ll. 531-628, pp. 570-571.

are brought within the context of the experience portrayed within the lists since they are each placed at symbolic points within the walls: over the east and west gates we find Venus and Mars, respectively; and placed over a "touret on the wal" is Diana:-

Estward ther stood a gate of marbul whit,
 Westward right swich another in the opposit . . .
 He (Theseus) estward hath, upon the gate above,
 In worshipec of Venus, goddesse of love,
 Doon make an auter and an oratorie;
 And on the gate westward, in memorie
 Of Mars, he maketh right swich another,
 That coste largely of gold a fother.
 And northward, in a touret on the wall,
 Of alabastre whit and reed coral,
 An oratorie, riche for to see,
 In worshipec of Dyane of chastitee,
 Hath Theseus doon wrought in noble wyse.

(K.T. 1893-4; 1903-13.)

Here we find that Mars and Venus are placed in direct opposition to one another, and it is apparent in this context that love and strife are set against one another. However much we may recall the love affair of Venus and Mars, we must admit that their association in the "Knight's Tale" does not suggest that any synthesis of their powers will produce Harmony. It is their opposition which fascinates Chaucer for the moment rather than their compatibility.

But furthermore, the fact that Mars and Venus are placed in opposition to one another along the path of the sun adds the dimension of birth and death to the already symbolic lists. This would also explain the two gates over which Venus and Mars preside, for in a sense, there can be only two "gates" in this life. The contestants enter from the one and make their exit from the other. The analogy of a "stage" to life is still well known in the most famous example from Shakespeare: "All the world's a stage . . ." ⁶

6. As You Like It, Variorum Works of Shakespeare, ed. Furness, II, vii, 147 ff., pp. 121-128.

But there have been many such analogies and it is apparent from the "Knight's Tale" that the frequent usage of this "conceit" in the Renaissance was founded on a substantial tradition. One of the most appealing examples is the short poem by Sir Walter Raleigh:-

What is our life? A play of passion,
 Our mirth the music of division.
 Our mothers' wombs the tiring-houses be,
 Where we are dressed for this short comedy.
 Heaven the judicious sharp spectator is,
 That sits and marks still who doth act amiss.
 Our graves that hide us from the searching sun
 Are like drawn curtains when the play is done.
 Thus march we, playing to our latest rest,
 Only we die in earnest, that's no jest.⁷

In a sense, it is precisely this conceit which is expanded by Chaucer and given a full treatment. By Raleigh's time, it was only a conceit; but to Chaucer it was still vital and could be explored with great subtlety. What is the "Lord" Theseus if not the "judicious sharp spectator" who is heaven's representative on earth and clearly symbolic of a greater "Lord" whose "gentlesse" would remove the penalty of death from the battle of life?

Venus' temple is situated over the eastern gate where the sun rises; and as the sun revives the world by driving the darkness of night away, so Venus continually revives the world through the power of love to recreate life. Mars, the grim god of strife and war, stands at the western gate where the sun is seen to decline. The sun's daily "death" at night symbolizes the same things as its

7. Walter Raleigh, "What is our Life . . .?" included in the Oxford Book of Sixteenth Century Verse, chosen by E.K. Chambers (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), p. 499. I have used the 1966 reprint.

yearly death at the solstice of winter and it is appropriate that Mars, who is well acquainted with death, should preside over this symbolic gate. Mars is not simply death's representative, but Chaos' as well.

With these distinctions in force the battle between the friends cannot help but take on a cosmic significance. Both combatants enter the lists with the same desire: to win the lady Emelye by the force of arms. But to this purpose they bring two very different loyalties. Arcite prays to Mars for the victory in the battle which will decide which of the knights may marry Emelye. His choice is direct and logical inasmuch as the issue will be decided by the force of arms. Obviously, Mars is the ultimate patron of arms: how, then, could Arcite lose the battle if Mars were to befriend him? Aside from the obvious reason for Arcite's choice of Mars as his patron, there is the possible symbolic connotation suggested by Mars' placement in the lists. In the eyes of the world it is Mars, strife, war, and death which is stronger than Venus, love, and beauty. And therefore, Arcite has every reason to believe - as his worldly logic tells him - that the battle will rage in Mars' direction. He has no faith in love. Chaucer, I believe, is showing us the picture of a man of little faith in two senses: Arcite rejects a faith in Venus and is a sceptic in love, and at the same time he symbolizes a man of little faith in the wider, religious sense. Chaucer's courtly sentiments would have allowed him to symbolize each of these kinds of faith by one another. But what Arcite forgets is that the battles within the lists of "this world" are not the sum total of existence. There are other "worlds" and other "judicious sharp spectators" who watch to see which of the "players" act aright or amiss. Arcite makes no provision for Saturn's

judgement which is made far beyond the confines of the walls of Theseus' stadium; and therefore his plans are thrown into confusion. He does not see that though the battle - or life, or love - may indeed move toward the western gate, that still there is something beyond the gate.

Palamon, who has a lover's faith, believes in Venus and in the "rebirth" of life and love which gives the lie to the meager experiences of this world. He, therefore, places himself in Venus' hands, content to win his lady by her devices, after whatever amount of pain and suffering she may prescribe. A side of the Venus-Mars polarity which has not been mentioned so far, but which has immediate relevance to the Faerie Queene, is the opposition of "mastery" and "gentillesse." The masterful Arcite places his faith in Mars and the skill of arms so that he may win his lady. He is like Scudamour, and his fortune with the "fire" of love causes him to be:-

. . . brent to asshen colde;

(2957)

a fate which could easily overtake the tortured Scudamour who languishes outside of the fiery House of Busyrane.

The virtuous lover is prepared to renounce mastery in love at the same time as he declares his war on chastity:-

. . . wisly as I shall for everemoore
Emforth my might, thy trewe servant be,
And holden werre alwey with chastitee.

. . .

I kepe noght of armes for to yelp,
Ne I ne axe nat tomorwe to have victorie,
Ne renoun in this cas, ne veyne glorie
Of Pris of armes blowen up and down;
But I wolde have fully possessioun
Of Emelye, and dye in thy servyse.
Fynd thou the manere hou, and in what wyse:
I recche nat but it may better be

To have victorie of hem, or they of me,
So that I have my lady in myne armes.

(K.T. 2234-36; 2238-47)

Palamon has "faith" that Venus' power is ultimately more incisive than Mars'. What is implied in this lover's faith is the recognition of Venus' capability to serve Dame Nature and to aid her in the continual recreation of the world which provides an eternity through mutability. But furthermore, since Palamon is well aware of the terms of the contest which insist on the death of one of the knights, it must be particularly apparent that he trusts in another kind of "rebirth" and "regeneration", which Venus has the capability of bestowing to her suppliants. Though he admits that he cannot see how she will accomplish it, this knight still trusts that Venus will in some way favor him as an individual. He knows that he can die a lover's death and yet be reborn through Venus' "grace."

In the wider sense, he expresses a faith in worlds beyond his own and therefore takes into account the operation of other forces in the universe. He knows that the outcome of the affair can still favor him even if he loses the battle. Therefore, Saturn's decision does not throw his plans into confusion as they do Arcite's.

Chaucer was exploring the power of Venus' love in the world and he found it to be stronger than either of the other loves of friendship or brotherhood. Essentially the real conflicts of the "Knight's Tale" are among the three degrees of love: friendship, love of womankind, and family love. Arcite and Palamon are sworn "brothers" but they are also of the same actual family:-

And so bifel that in the taas they founde,
Thurgh-girt with many a grevous bloody wounde,
Two yonge knyghtes liggyngely and by,
Bothe in oon armes, wroght full richely,
Of which two Arcita highte that oon,
And that oother knyght highte Palamon.

Nat fully quyke, ne fully dede they were,
 But by hir cote-armures and by hir gere,
 The heraudes knewe hem best in special
 As they that weren of the blood roial
 Of Thebes, and of sustren two yborn.

. . .

This Palamon gan knytte his browes tweye.
 "It nere," quod he, "to thee no greet honour
 For to be fals, ne for to be traitour
 To me, that am thy cosyn and thy brother
 Ysworn ful depe . . .

(K.T. 1009-19; 1128-32.)

It is apparent from the conflict which arises between these knights that the love of Emelye takes precedence over the other two loves. And, in addition, we find two further distinctions within the second degree of love. Arcite's denial of Palamon's claim in love exposes the two kinds of affection:-

. . . Thou woost nat yet now
 Wheither she be a womman or goddesse!
 Thyn is affeccioun of hoolynesse,
 And myn is love, as to a creature . . .

(K.T. 1156-59.)

This distinction was well heeded by Spenser who transferred the transcendental aspects of Palamon's "affection of holiness" to the love of friends. The male friends love with a purer love; but man and woman can also be friends and thereby partake of a transcendental affection. Palamon endures the contest because his love is founded on the eternity beyond mundane time. His rejection of Mars is, as I have argued, a partial rejection of "this world," and though his support of Venus has vast implications for the stability of "this world," yet we have seen that his "affection of holiness" leads him to a wider religious "faith" in a transcendental reality which is capable - though he can never know how - of bestowing regeneration and rebirth to the individual.

The survival of the knight who loves with a religious affection and the death of the knight who loves "as to a creature," suggests the analogy of these knights and their respective "loves" to the most basic division within the human soul: the dualism of eternal spirit and mortal body. Palamon survives because the spirit survives; Arcite dies because the creature is mortal.

Emelye's role in the drama is that of a May goddess who has been doomed to marriage by "eterne word" - the same "eterne word" which would keep Arcite and Palamon in the prison of this life unless they manage to have some compassion on their lineage. Her first appearance in the May garden is intentionally suggestive of Venus' birth upon the foamy waves:-

. . . Hir yelow heer was broyded in a tresse
 Bihynde hir bak, a yerde long, I gesse.
 And in the gardyn, at the sonne upriste,
 She walketh up and doun, and as hire liste
 She gadereth floures, party white and rede,
 To make a subtil gerland for hire hede . . .

(K.T. 1049-54.)

There is emphasis on the colors green and white and though some imagination may be required to transform a May garden into a green sea, yet it would seem that the reference is at least not far fetched. For, the maiden who appears fairer than:-

. . . the lylie upon his stalke grene,

(K.T. 1036.)

and who walks through:-

. . . the gardyn, ful of braunches grene,

(K.T. 1067.)

in the very season of Venus' birth, might very well appear like Venus upon the waves. Palamon, at least, sees Emelye as Venus:-

I noot wher she be womman or goddesse,
 But Venus is it soothly, as I gesse.

(K.T. 1101-2.)

The maiden Emelye compares with both Venus and Diana. Her chastity is symbolized by her association with white; and red is Venus' color. She appears as a combination of both goddesses:- a chaste and yet fertile creature who seems both heavenly and temporal. Through her man may purchase his release from the prison which holds him:-

. . . "Venus, if it be thy wil
Yow in this gardyn thus to transfigure
Bifore me, sorweful, wrecched creature,
Out of this prisoun help that we may scapen.
And if so be my destyneee be shapen
By eterne word to dyen in prisoun,
Of oure lynage have som compassioun,
That is so lowe ybrought by tirannie."

(K.T. 1104-11.)

Arcite finds release first of all, and Palamon escapes later through Emelye's inspiration. Perhaps the poet meant to show us how corporal love has the more immediate reward through lineage, but that the higher love of Palamon is more enduring, though not as quickly fulfilled.⁸ Arcite may therefore find the compassion through lineage which releases man from the sterile prison; but Palamon must wait longer and endure more before Venus' grace allows him the individual release he seeks. In the end Palamon will gain both kinds of release as a reward for his devotion to the higher love.⁹

Emelye is, clearly, only an object with which the story of the knights deals. Like Griselda, she has only one real side to her character because only one side is of importance.¹⁰ Her own desires

8. This argument assumes that the brothers represent two polarized functions of soul.

9. Palamon's love for Emelye is, of course, an earthly one as well.

10. See W.L. Renwick, Edmund Spenser (London: Edward Arnold Publishers, 1925). I am using the edition published in the University Paperbacks series (London: Methuen, 1964), p. 151.

are irrelevant, as she finds out herself when she prays to remain in the service of Diana:-

. . . "Doghter, stynt thyn hevynesse.
Among the goddes hye it is affermed
And by eterne word writen and confermed,
Thou shalt ben wedded unto oon of tho
That han for thee so muchel care and wo . . .

(K.T. 2348-52.)

It may seem that Diana is an ineffectual force in the lists since she is not capable of supporting the wishes of her devotee. And certainly she seems to be somewhat removed from the real direction of the battle since she is placed in the north and has no gate over which to preside. Yet, psychologically, Diana's power is considerable since Emelye's chastity and purity is somewhat responsible for attracting Palamon and Arcite.

The battle in the lists depicts the condition of life. In a sense, Theseus may be seen as a figure of Christ whose appearance is responsible for restoring a kindly society founded on benevolence, toleration and proper degree. His love and "gentillesse" prompts him to alter the death sentence which would ordinarily accompany the battle. Metaphorically, perhaps, this suggests the power of Christ to bestow immortality to the soul. But the bodily part of the soul will not endure and so Arcite is bound to die despite the "Lord's" benign decree. Theseus takes the same pity on the brothers Arcite and Palamon as Agape will take on the brothers Priamond, Diamond, and Triamond; both try to resolve the problem of mortality without totally succeeding because of "eternall fate" (4.2.50.)

Theseus' speech at the conclusion of the tale confirms the cosmic allegory. His emphasis on the order of the world which the "Prince" has established is parallel in significance to the order and degree of the stadium which he, Theseus, has also created.

Thus, the lists are an image of the stable and orderly universe, and Theseus is an earthly representative of God's justice. The stadium has four significant points: east and west we find Venus and Mars; northward, on the wall we find Diana; and presumably Theseus is placed in the only place of honor which seems unoccupied: the south. That he should occupy the place of a god is not without authorial precedent:-

Duc Theseus was at a wyndow set,
Arrayed right as he were a god in trone.

(K.T. 2528-9.)

Theseus' words must have great significance as long as he is, in some measure at least, God's representative on earth. Along with the emphasis on the cosmological order which God has established, Theseus finds that man, himself, reflects the order of the universe by having the potential to create an eternity through mutability. Since man is well down the chain of being the eternity of which he partakes can only be of a mutable kind. Theseus cites examples from the world of nature to demonstrate the validity of his arguments, but his persuasiveness is such that we may tend to forget that there are other worlds and other kinds of eternity. His argument holds for this world, but not for the "other" world. Surely we are bound to consider the reality of that other world after the completion of Palamon's story; especially so, considering that Palamon has been rewarded for his devotion to a transcendent love, and his reward has taken the form of a "rebirth" which transcends the kind of "eternity" Theseus has in mind as he cites his oaks, stones, and men. Palamon's victory is a qualification of Theseus' speech.

. . . spesces of thynges and progressiouns
 Shullen enduren by successiouns,
 And nat eterne, withouten any lye . . .

. . .

Thanne is it wysdom, as it thynketh me,
 To maken vertu of necessitee . . .

(K.T. 3013-15; 3041-2.)

Indeed, the eternal mutability of this world constrains one to make virtue of necessity but this is done in expectation of another world. Hence, Theseus' observations imply an upward movement along the chain of necessity as well as a downward one, and we might expect him to conclude his speech as Philosophie does in Boece when she considers the same subject. She begins with the observations of the eternal mutability of this world, but she concludes by leaving the lower plane of "fate" and beginning to invoke the higher plane of providence:-

O Fadir, yyve thou to the thought to steyen up into
 thi streyte seete; and graunte hym to enviroune the
 welle of good; and, the lyght ifounde, graunte hym
 to fyche the clere syghtes of his corage in the;
 and skatere thou and tobreke the weyghts and the cloudes
 of earthly hevynesse; and schyn thou by thi bryghtnesse,
 for thou art cleernesse, thow art pesible reste to
 debonayre folk; thou thiself art bygynnyng, berere,
 ledere, path and terme; to looke on the, that is our
 ende.

(Boece III, Metrum 9, ll. 38-49.)

By making virtue of necessity one lives according to the laws of nature and within "the weyghtes and the cloudes of earthly hevynesse." But clearly we are meant to transcend this material realm by escaping the:-

. . . foule prisoun of this lyf

(K.T. 3061.)

so that Theseus' solution is admirable in terms of this world,

though it is lacking the overt references to the higher world which characterize Philosophy's speech in Boece. Even if these references are implied behind everything Theseus says, the main point is that the "Knight's Tale" is primarily concerned with this world, with the second degree of love, and with eternity through mutability. Chaucer implies the direction of man's life, and makes us aware of the importance of a "faith" like Palamon's, but in the end the story is concerned with this world, and the love of man and woman which has, inescapably, triumphed over the love of friends and the love of family.

Chaucer had asserted that the second degree of love is a higher love than friendship in terms of this world since it serves nature's, and God's, order. And furthermore, it is always capable of superseding friendship because friendship is sterile and "love" is fertile. But Chaucer also anticipated Spenser when he demonstrated that Palamon's "faith" in love's transcendence was more valuable than Arcite's love "as to a creature." Thus in a sense, Chaucer showed a marriage of spiritual and fleshly love, which Spenser was also to develop. In Spenser's love philosophy friendship is accorded the highest place, but is allowed to penetrate all of the other loves and infuse them with a spiritual transcendence. The "faith" which Palamon brings to fleshly love is called "friendship" in the *Faerie Queene*, for love without friendship and the spiritual transcendence thereof, is simply love "as to a creature." By blending friendship with transcendent faith Spenser made a synthesis of themes which, in effect, solved the problems of conflict between the love of women and friendship. And in so doing he joined the two worlds, those of spirit and flesh, in a more satisfactory manner

than Chaucer had done. I have mentioned that the "Knight's Tale" concludes with emphasis on this world, and especially that is the order and stability of lineage which is cited as the link between man and God, with nature as a mediator. But in Spenser's philosophy the dualism of flesh and spirit, and of this world and the next, is far less apparent because through a spiritual friendship man can find himself related to the "other" world in ways apart from his merely fleshly roles in nature. The "Knight's Tale" seems to have left us with only one way to serve God in love: through the exercise of nature's fleshly decrees to increase and multiply. Spenser gives us this motive and adds friendship which provides for a spiritual as well as fleshly lineage.

Spenser's solution is not far removed from the Boethian sentiments of Chaucer. Having derived much from Chaucer he was happy to reveal his debt in the invocation of the second canto of book four. And, I submit, there was no better time for a hint as to this influence than just before a story which successfully resolves an important problem in the philosophy of love.

The conflict between friendship and love is of prime importance to the Cambel-Triamond story, and in this theme we can sense the influence of Chaucer. Canacee can no more avoid marriage than Emelye, despite her brother's protection. In the "Knight's Tale" Theseus agreed that Emelye should marry, and therefore he supported the victory of heterosexual love over family love. But in the Cambel-Triamond story the family love of Cambel and Canacee is overthrown by the friendship of Cambel and Triamond: nonetheless, the new friendship tends to embrace the other loves and ennoble them. The triumph of friendship represents a triumph of all the loves, whereas the victory of married love in the "Knight's Tale" takes place at the expense of the other loves. It is fairly certain that love has destroyed Arcite, and that its flames have burned him to ashes. If he salvages some nobility through his "gentillesse" we can applaud him: but whether he does so or not, Palamon and Emelye will eventually find the means toward their happiness.

The story of Cambel and Triamond begins in the second canto with the description of Agape. This episode discusses friendship, or amity, and friendship is born of a love which is unmistakeably Christian:-

For in God, and all thing that cometh of God, nothing is of more great estimation than love, called in Latin amor, whereof amicitia cometh, named in English friendship or amity; the which taken away from the life of man, no house shall abide standing, no field shall be in culture. And that is lightly perceived, if a man do remember what cometh of dissension and discord. Finally he seemeth to take the sun from the world, that taketh friendship from from man's life.¹¹

11. Sir Thomas Elyot, The Book Named The Governor, ed. S. E. Leach, 2nd ed. (London: J. E. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1902) p. 155.

Here, as in the descriptions of Ate and the false friends, one notices the immediate suggestion of wide-spread, even cosmic chaos associated with the discord arising from various threats to friendship. Friendship is like the sun since it is so vital to the life of a society. It is of the first importance to Elyot, and Spenser, to emphasize the doctrine that friendship is derived from God's love for man - the very love which Ate hates:-

Moreover the same Tully defineth friendship in this manner, saying that it is none other thing but a perfect consent of all things appertaining as well to God as to man, with benevolence and charity; and that knoweth nothing given of God (except sapience) to man more commodius. Which definition is excellent and very true.¹²

This love is given a personification in the figure of Agape, and it is further "unfolded" in her three sons Priamond, Diamond, and Triamond:-

Their mother was a Fay, and had the skill
Of secret things, and all the powers of nature,
Which she by art could vse vnto her will,
And to her seruice bind each liuing creature,
Through secret understanding of their feature.
Thereto she was right faire, when so her face
She list discouer, and of goodly stature;
But she as Fayes are wont, in priuie place
Did spend her dayes, and lov'd in forests wyld to space.
(4.2.44.)

Her ravishment is a metaphor for divine inspiration, in the same way that Chrysogone's was.¹³ It is interesting that the episodes of Chrysogone and Agape, both of which depict a

12. Elyot, The Governor, pp. 132-133.

13. Chrysogone's impregnation by the sun produced the sisters Belpheobe and Amoret (3.6.1-28.) Agape's impregnation produces the three brothers. In each case Spenser is handling the Orphic rules to "unfold" a mystery with particular reference to human nature.

ravishment and miraculous birth, occur as an introduction to the two most important episodes of each respective book. Chrysogone's story leads into the materially fruitful Garden of Adonis; Agape's story leads into the more spiritual battle in the lists. Book three may be said to be particularly involved in the material side of love, and book four, with the absorption of matter through the embrace of spiritual purpose.

Agape represents Christian love in nature and her three sons, Priamond, Diamond, and Triamond represent three orders of love which have been brought to birth in human nature. The first born is family love; second is the "raging fire of love to woman kind;" and third is the "zeale of friends combyned with vertues meet." (4.9.1-2.) This is the order in which these loves are "unfolded" in the individual, and Spenser has taken its example as an indication of their actual order of creation.

The order of importance among the loves suggests another possible significance. As Roche has noticed in the Kindly Flame, the three brothers may symbolize stages of soul.¹⁴ Indeed, Spenser begs a comparison between natural family love and the vegetable soul, married love and the animal soul, the love of friends and the rational soul. Of this hierarchy, only the rational soul can claim an eternity of spirit, for even though the animal soul partakes of the rational soul in some way, it is bound to perish with the body along with the vegetable soul. The association of the three loves with the three souls is

14. Thomas P. Roche, The Kindly Flame, pp. 19-22.

fortuitous for it demonstrates clearly the significance of God's love for man, and shows that friendship, alone, is eternal.¹⁵

The descriptions of the brothers are intended to suggest the functions of the three souls whereby the vegetable soul represents a purely bodily function, the rational soul is purely intellectual, and spiritual, and the animal soul is a balance between these extremes. In the same way, of course, we shall find that the second degree of love is a balance between the natural love of family and the spiritual love of friends:-

Amongst those knights there were three brethren bold,
Three bolder brethren neuer were yborne,
Borne of one mother in one happie mold,
Borne at one burden in one happie morne,
Thrise happie mother, and thrise happie morne,
That bore three such, three such not to be fond;
Her name was Agape whose children werne
All three as one, the first hight Priamond,
The second Dyamond, the youngest Triamond.

Stout Priamond, but not so strong to strike,
Strong Diamond, but not so stout a knight,
But Triamond was stout and strong alike: (4.2.41-2.)

Triamond appears to be a combination of his two elder brothers for he possesses Priamond's stoutness and Diamond's strength. He is, therefore, the next highest link in the hierarchical chain of loves and souls. But once this has been indicated, Spenser continues by showing how each of the brothers, and implicitly the souls and loves, actually function with reference to one another:-

15. This does not contradict Spenser's doctrine of kindred souls (Hymn to Beauty ll. 190-204.). Lovers purchase the same kind of eternity as friends through the exercise of friendship. It is therefore absolutely essential for lovers to become friends.

On horsebacke vsed Triamond to fight,
 And Priamond on foote had more delight,
 But horse and foote knew Diamond to wield: (4.2.42.)

Here we see quite clearly that Diamond is a "mean" force between the extremes of Priamond and Triamond, Fighting on foot is the most natural way to fight; the use of a horse represents a higher development in the art of warfare, not to mention that the horse is commonly a Platonic symbol of animal passions.¹⁶ Triamond's mastery of the horse is, to this extent, a mastery of animal passions appropriate to both the rational soul and the love of friends.

These three brothers are three branches of one outpouring of love and significantly, when Spenser sums up, the two most conspicuous words he uses are "love" and "soul," showing that the brothers are indeed related to both:-

These three did loue each other dearely well,
 And with so firme affection were allyde,
 As if but one soule in them all did dwell,
 Which did her powre into three parts diuylde;
 Like three faire branches budding farre and wide,
 That from one roote deriu'd their vitall sap:
 And like that roote that doth her life diuide,
 Their mother was, and had full blessed hap,
 These three so noble babes to bring forth at one clap.
 (4.2.43.)

It is through Agape's love the three brothers' fates are artificially joined. Thus, when Diamond and Priamond have "died" and been reborn in Triamond, we see in the composite figure of Triamond the symbol of the strained harmony within man himself. Agape's love, like Theseus' gentillesse, is bound to create a certain amount of pain and, in the end, to be frustrated by eternal word. So it is with man: through God's love - indeed,

16. Wind, Pagan Mysteries, pp. 145-146.

through revelation in Christ - man possesses an eternal soul in harmony with mortal souls. While man is alive in this world the cloying material souls will vanish away with the flesh itself, and the eternal, spiritual souls will find release. In the battle in the lists, therefore, the gradual infolding of the brothers represents the creation of man. And instead of being at his best through the union of the three souls and loves, he appears as a fraile and tense harmony. It is only when these fleshly souls and loves begin to be driven off by the relentless battle that Triamond increases in stature. It has previously been though that the infolding of brother-souls is the factor which ennobles Triamond, thus making him Cambel's equal. This argument overlooks the fact that Triamond loses these souls as fast as he gains them.¹⁷ It is my argument that quite the opposite is true: when Triamond manages to lose and transcend the brother souls, he has only then become an equal of Cambel's.

The third canto begins with the suggestion that Agape's efforts were misguided, but the tone of these stanzas is reminiscent of that which prevailed in the House of Despair from the first book,¹⁸ and it is difficult to give much credence to these sentiments as a result. The mere fact that Agape had confronted a "chaos" where the grim sisters live, and had attempted

17. (4.3.30.ff.) See John Erskine, "The Virtue of Friendship in the Faerie Queene," cited in Variorum Spenser, IV, esp. p. 295 where Erskine argues that Triamond becomes Cambel's equal by acquiring his brothers' souls.

18. (1.9.35.) The existence of pain is no argument against virtuous action.

to create a harmony and concord of some sort, is enough to make her one of the heroes of the fourth book.

In the actual battle of canto three each brother acts out his part as a representative of one of the three loves. Shortly before his death Priamond boasts to Cambel that he has kept him alive in the battle for a decent period of time in order to show respect for his family. In this way we learn that Priamond is concerned with the first degree of love:-

Lo faitour there thy meede vnto thee take,
The meede of they mischallenge and abet:
Not for thine owne, but for thy sisters sake,
Haue I thus long thy life vnto thee let: (4.3.11.)

Diamond approaches Cambel in another way, which is entirely befitting his association with the second degree of love. He is like Scudamour who believes that he may capture a lady by "right:"

Whom when of ground his brother next beheld,
Though sad and sorie for so heauy sight,
Yet leaue vnto his sorrow did not yeold,
But rather stird to vengeance and despight,
Through secret feeling of his generous spright,
Rusht fiercely forth, the battell to renew,
As in reuersion of his brothers right;
And challenging the Virgin as his dew. (4.3.14. italics mine.)

While Priamond had been "practic" in fight, Diamond is filled with a lover's rage (4.3.16.) and like a lover brought to distraction, he will brook no interference nor delay in obtaining his love:-

Till Diamond disdeigning long delay
Of doubtfull fortune wauering to and fro,
Resolu'd to end it one or other way;
And heau'd his murderous axe at him with mightly sway.
(4.3.17.)

Triamond's efforts in the battle are appropriately selfless since he represents the highest love of friendship. Like

Palamon, in one sense, he neither fears the outcome nor desires the glory of victory:-

Yet nought thereof was Triamond adredde,
He desperate of glorious victory. (4.3.25.)

But nonetheless he is a dangerous foe to Cambel. At the moment he joins in the battle he is possessed of his brothers' souls, and to this extent he is vulnerable. As he gradually loses the other souls he approaches a purity of self which is capable of being balanced with Cambel's power. The transcendence of Triamond is, therefore, suggestive of the triumphs of both friendship and the highest soul. All that is needed is the effort of Concord to create peace so that the knights may easily effect a friendship. Cambina is therefore Concord's representative, but also she is associated with the highest kind of Necessity which insists on concord among friends.

So far I have dwelled exclusively on the relationships among the three brothers in analysing this episode; but now it is time to turn to what can only be called an entirely new dimension. In the first place, the whole episode consists of three stages which correspond to each of the three loves and souls: Cambel and Canacee support the first stage which is challenged by all the three brothers supporting the second stage. In the end, the third stage of friendship triumphs over the second and first stages of the love of women, and family love. But in this triumph we shall find that all of the loves are reconstituted and unwind in a newer, more stable harmony. When Cambel and Triamond unite in friendship they become the "extremes" of a tetrad

which includes Cambel and Cambina, Triamond and Canacee as lovers; and Cambel and Canacee, Triamond and Cambina as families. Thus, all the three loves unite within a tetrad whose first love is undenyably that of friendship.

This "dimension" of the battle is somewhat contradictory to the former one inasmuch as Triamond appears to represent the second degree of love, along with his other brothers, instead of the highest love of friendship. But the contradiction is more apparent than real. First of all, the motivation for the battle is entirely attributable to the second degree of love, and all of the three brothers fight with Cambel in hopes of obtaining Canacee as a wife. Each brother may be distinguishable from each other according to a hierarchy of some sort, but at the same time, they are all involved in the same activity for the same reasons. And secondly, although Triamond battles for the love of women, his triumph is clearly the result of friendship. Therefore, there is no inconsistency in the view that the episode passes through three stages: i.e., the family love (Cambel and Canacee) threatened by married love (the three brothers) and resolved by friendship (Cambel and Triamond); for the hierarchy of brothers is not disturbed in any way by this "over-view" of the episode.

If these interpretations were all that Spenser meant one might agree with Edgar Wind's opinion that our "poet" has become a "pedant" through the "perfunctory handling of Orphic rules." ¹⁹

19. Wind, Pagan Mysteries, pp. 209-210

Wind's objection is, of course, restricted to the three stanzas depicting the "unfolding" of Agape's love (4.2.41-3.), and to this extent we have to agree with his assessment. But if it is true that our poet has been reduced to pedantry at times throughout this episode, it is also absolutely certain that he transcends the obvious simplicity of his intent and actually solves a problem of some significance to the Renaissance mind: the problem of the dualism of flesh and spirit.

Had Spenser adhered to a strictly Neoplatonic view of the universe his solution to the problem of the "dualism" of flesh and spirit would have been entirely different. Though he enjoyed using Platonic materials he was, himself, no Platonist.²⁰ It is precisely his unwillingness to discard the fleshly side of the dualism which causes him to find a way to harmonise the flesh with the spirit; and this is precisely what the Cambel-Triamond episode does.²¹

Overall, Cambel's artificial stability contrasts with the instability of the three brothers. Cambel possesses the ring which makes him immune to the wounds inflicted by the brothers, and it is this fleshly stability which characterizes him. The ring is the artificial symbol of Canacee's natural powers:-

20. Renwick, Edmund Spenser, p. 167 f.

21. Some readers disagree that Spenser attempts to unite the "lives" of flesh and spirit. Professor J. B. Broadbent argues the poet's distaste for the flesh altogether. See J. B. Broadbent, Poetic Love (London: Chatto & Windus, 1964), pp. 73-91.

But yet his sisters skill vnto him lent
 Most confidence and hope of happie speed,
 Conceiued by a ring, which she him sent,
 That mongst the manie vertues, which we reed,
 Had power to staunch al wounds, that mortally did bleed.
 (4.2.39.)

The ring is the product of Canacee's "skill" which is closely linked to nature:-

Cambelloes sister was fayre Canacee,
 That was learnedst Ladie in her dayes,
 Well seene in euerie science that mote bee,
 And euerie secret worke of natures wayes . . .
 (4.2.35.)

The brothers, however, appear to be instable and mutable: Triamond acquires his strength from the "deaths" of his brother-souls and thus, through a recurring pattern of death and rebirth, he seems to maintain himself through mutability. It is quite evident that Cambel and Triamond represent the opposite extremes stability and mutability: indeed, at one point in the battle, before Triamond acquires his own kind of stability, Cambel and Triamond symbolize the cryptic statement "eterne in mutabilitie." For Cambel's eternal stability represents the stability of the flesh through lineage, and therefore Cambel is inescapably involved with mutability at the same time as he cannot (i.e., lineage be destroyed by it. Cambel and the ring represent the survival of the race, rather than the individual. This is why his protection is derived from an artificial ring which draws its power from nature, and which provides a fleshly protection. Further, the ring is a symbol of eternity which belongs to Cambel only so long as he has need of it in the battle with the brothers who symbolize mutability.

In the early stages of the battle we are almost convinced that Cambel's power of fleshly lineage will exceed the brothers'

spiritual power. We observe the brothers dying one by one and we assume - according to the logic of this world - that if the first two brothers die, then the third must die as well. But Triamond grows stronger as he transcends the other brothers. As he transcends his brothers he also transcends mutability to become eternally stable on a spiritual level. In one sense he becomes Cambel's equal because he has managed to acquire an "eternity" analogous to Cambel's. But there is no doubt at all that Triamond's "eternity" is more powerful, and more valuable than Cambel's because as it is above time and mutability and it bestows eternity to the individual. Cambel's eternity, as we have seen, depends on mutability and does not save the individual. Thus, Cambel's eternity is derived from the disagreeable worldly power of mutability; Triamond's is, on the other hand, a spiritual kind of stability which keeps the individual eternal by totally transcending mutability. In the end of the battle the friendship between Cambel and Triamond represents a union of flesh and spirit, and two kinds of eternity: the eternity of fleshly lineage, and the eternity of the spirit which preserves the individual. Cambel's "eternity" recalls the Garden of Adonis from the third book where we found the phrase "eterne in mutability;" Triamond's stability looks ahead - as much of the fourth book does - to the Mutabilitie cantos and, in particular, to these lines:-

Then gin I thinke on that which Nature say'd,
 Of that same time when no more Change shall be,
 But stedfast rest of all things firmely stayd
 Vpon the pillours of Eternity,
 That is contrayr to Mutabilitie:
 But thence-forth all shall rest eternally
 With Him that is the God of Sabboath hight:
 O that great Sabboath God, graunt me that Sabbaoths sight.
 (7.8.2.)

In the seventh book we are assured by implication that the seven days of creation imply an eighth day of resurrection when all shall be eternally reunited with God. In the Cambel-Triamond episode the same promise is held out to the individual in the sense that each person will transcend time and mutability through death just as the world itself will on the "eighth day" of creation.

Spenser had good reason to be proud of a philosophy which unified flesh and spirit, eternity in mutability and eternity beyond mutability, and the three degrees of love in one packed episode. In a sense, he solved the problem of the conflicts among the three kinds of love by solving the problems of a dualism of flesh and spirit. By demonstrating that the flesh and spirit are compatible and that each relies on the other to a great extent, he could justify the claims of both fleshly and spiritual loves. Spenser rejects the Platonist's view that the spirit must transcend the flesh in this world. In place of this Spenser argues that the claims of this world are valid and that when they are balanced against those of the spirit, both the flesh and spirit benefit. In metaphysical terms the spirit and flesh should be brought into harmony; in practice, the three loves must be harmonized, because friendship is the spiritual love which endures above all others, and family love is a natural love which is essential to this world. Therefore, when friendship is allowed to temper the other loves it adds a kind of spiritual stability to them. And when family love and the love of women co-exist with the higher love of friendship, the world is thereby maintained through eternal mutability.

We have discussed the "extremes" of the tetrad and have found that Cambel and Triamond represent, basically, a balance of the flesh with the spirit, and that they also represent extremes of fleshly and spiritual love. The "means" of this tetrad are somewhat easier to understand. Canacee, for whom all the brothers fight, represents the impulse toward Cupid's love. Cambina represents another "mean" which is capable of quelling the strife and allowing friendship to evolve naturally from the situation, once the occasion of the battle is removed. She is not exactly the bestower of friendship, but rather the representative of Concord and Necessity. All she does is make peace, and this is the one ingredient which serves both Concord and Necessity, and allows all the loves to unit in harmony. The basic form of the tetrad is, therefore:-

CAMBEL:CAMBINA::CANACEE:TRIAMOND

OR,

FLESHLY LINEAGE

SPIRITUAL ETERNITY

family love; peace::love of women: friendship

It is clear that Cambina serves Concord when she brings the drink of Nepenthe:-

Nepenthe is a drinck of souerayne grace,
Deuized by the Gods, for to asswage
Harts grief, and bitter gall away to chace,
which stirs vp anguish and contentious rage:
In stead thereof sweet peace and quiet age
It doth establish in the troubled mynd. (4.3.43.)

This drink counters the influence of Ate's "seeds" of dissention (4.1.25.). But Cambina must also serve Necessity, so long as Spenser's usage of the term implied:-

Constraint or compulsion having its basis in the
natural constitution of things: esp. such constraint

conceived as a law prevailing throughout the material universe and within the sphere of human action,²²

Indeed, Spenser is quite aware of the existence of Necessity which holds the entire material universe together by unbreakable bonds. He agrees with Chaucer that the same Necessity which governs the world, also governs the affairs of men. The primary rule of Necessity is the establishment of peace and love.

Cambina, as we have seen, establishes peace. And further, she knits all of the loves together through the force of Necessity. The Caduceus she bears demonstrates this association since the two serpents twined about the rod are bound by the "knot" simply by establishing the peace of Concord:-

The Egyptians also maintain that the attributes of the caduceus illustrate the generation, or "genesis" as it is called, of mankind; for they say that four deities are present to preside over a man's birth: his Genius, Fortune, Love, and Necessity. By the first two they understand the sun and the moon; for the sun, as the source of the breath of life and of heat and of light, is the creator and the guardian of a man's life and is therefore believed to be the Genius, or god, of a newborn child; the moon is Fortune, since she has charge of the body, and the body is at the mercy of the fickleness of change; the kiss of the serpents is the symbol of Love; and the knot is the symbol of Necessity.²³

Macrobius' association of the Caduceus with the birth of man suggests the appropriateness of citing this passage with respect to an episode which describes the birth of three loves. When Cambina joins Cambel and Triamond through the knot of Necessity she makes the way clear for frinedship to follow:-

22. OED, S.V. "necessity."

23. Macrobius, Saturnalia, trans. Davies, I.19.18, pp. 135-136.

For enmitie, that of no ill proceeds,
 But of occasion, with th'occasion ends;
 (4.4.1.)

and once friendship is established, all the other loves fall neatly into place.

The battle between Cambel and Triamond (once the other brothers are dead) is a battle against Necessity. When Cambina comes she bears the symbol of that great power in the material universe which orders the "natural constitution of things," and by this law the two knights are destined to be joined in friendship. When Cambina confronts them with the law of Necessity, symbolized in the Caduceus, they are struck still by its power.

But in addition to the rule of Necessity one requires the peace of Concord which comes in the form of the drink of Nepenthe. It is only after this drink that the knights become friends and so "make virtue of Necessity."

Canacee can be easily proved to represent the second kind of love, not only because she impels this kind of love, like Emelye in the "Knight's Tale," but because she is associated with the powers of nature. Again, it is well to recall Emelye because she, too, was unwilling to love and her determination was overthrown by strong Necessity. Her appearances in the May garden, which made her seem a "second Venus," revealed her association with the powers of nature. The two ladies have much in common since both refuse to love, both are associated with nature, both cause love to arise destructively in others, and both are "overthrown" by strong Necessity.

Although Spenser has taken much from the Squire's Tale, I suspect that Canacee's association with nature (4.2.35.) is best compared with the heroine of the "Knight's Tale." Emelye represents the fruitful potential of nature, both individually (as herself) and in the world in general. Canacee, though she refuses to love (4.2.37.), is nonetheless the ideal choice for love. She is gentle and chaste, and in the following descriptions she appears to be the opposite of Malecasta whose chastity is lost and whose looks are too free:-

Full many Lords, and many Knights her loued,
 Yet she to none of them her liking lent,
 Ne euer was with fond affection moued,
 But rul'd her thoughts with goodly gouernement,
 For dread of blame and honours blemishment;
 And eke vnto her lookes a law she made,
 That none of them once out of order went,
 But like to warie Centonels well stayd,
 Still watcht on euery side, of secret foes affrayd.
 (4.2.36.)

Canacee is not only potentially fruitful in the material, or physical sense, but she is fruitful in virtue as well. Indeed, she reveals as much when she willingly befriends Cambina. The knights Triamond and Cambel are not the only ones to accord with one another in friendship, for Canacee and Cambina express friendship with one another immediately after the battle ceases:-

All which, when gentle Canacee beheld,
 In hast she from her lofty chaire descended,
 To weet what sudden tidings was befeld:
 Where when she saw that cruell war so ended,
 And deadly foes so faithfully affrended,
 In louely wise she gan that Lady greet,
 Which had so great dismay so well amended,
 And entertaining her with curt'sies meet,
 Profest to her true friendship and affection sweet.

Thus, it is quite literally true in this story that all the loves originate in friendship.

CHAPTER TEN: "Masculine and Feminine Trials."

i

Cantos four and five are related to one another in very much the same way as books three and four are:-

It hath bene through all ages euer seene,
 That with the praise of armes and cheualrie,
 The prize of beautie still hath ioyned beene;
 And that for reasons speciall priuitie:
 For either doth on other much relie.
 For re seemes most fit the faire to serue,
 That can her best defend from villenie;
 And she most fit his service doth deserue,
 That fairest is and from her faith will neuer swerue.
 (4.5.1.)

Canto five depicts the feminine quest for beauty, and canto four relates the masculine quest for honor in the use of arms. To this extent the cantos are a microcosm of the two larger books which discuss the feminine nature (book three) and the masculine nature (book four).

There is, however, a more important part to be played by the fourth canto. Four is the number of the tetrad lately established in the third canto, and there is no better time to demonstrate its functions than in a fourth canto. The story of Cambel and Triamond continues, therefore, until we finally see the most essential lesson of the fourth book diagrammed by their actions. The victory of friends is the result of an exchange of roles in which each friend gives willingly what the other person needs. The exchange of armor is no simple chivalric conceit. It is the core of a philosophy of love which urges each partner to renounce mastery and give of oneself. It is the individual symbol of the vast cosmic exchange of roles encountered in the eleventh and twelfth cantos of this book when land and sea become married through mutual accord. Here, in the fourth canto, we see the extremes of the tetrad functioning in mutual love, and as long

as they are so-motivated we may assume that the rest of the tetrad is stable. Inasmuch as friendship created the tetrad, in the sense that all the other loves attended on the establishment of Necessity's concord and the resulting friendship of the knights, it is fair to say that the continued existence of the tetrad depends on the accord of the extremes. It is this accord which is celebrated in the fourth canto.

The exchange of armor means simply that the friendship of these knights is founded on a mutual giving and taking. The material Cambel can wear the armor of Triamond, thus showing that he can partake of the protection of spiritual and formal qualities; Triamond, conversely, takes the material armor of Cambel, and in so doing demonstrates his power to acquire a material protection. Each friend draws a kind of stability which is lacking in himself, from his friend. In like fashion we shall see Florimell acquiring strength from the sea (Marinell's element); and Marinell's hard heart will soften through contact with Florimell. But what better symbol of this kind of synthesis is there than in the figure of Britomart, herself, whole masculine armor covers and protects her feminine essence? Spenser's story of Cambel and Triamond demonstrates that the only true strength is from the synthesis of opposites in love; the most vulnerable characters in the Faerie Queene are often those who are unable to draw the strength they need because they refuse to give the strength needed by others.¹

1. Each of the four continuing love stories in books three and four can be cited as proof. Britomart and Artegall are symbolic of all the other lovers in one special way: their love will be an exchange of masculine and feminine qualities making one harmony from two opposites. In a very real sense Artegall and Britomart (and all the other lovers) are weak in certain ways until love establishes its union: Artegall requires a devotion to love (the "crown of knighthood") in order to claim the finesse his rough-hewn character lacks; Britomart requires the masculine strength as a better protector of her vulnerable self than even the armor and lance, Marriage provides the very qualities which are lacking in the lovers, so that two people become one in acutality by each completing themselves in and through the other.

The victory of Cambel and Triamond occurs on the second of three days, and it is therefore the "crown" of the tournament.² When the prize of victory is offered, the friends continue to act in the same manner that brought them the victory:-

Then all with one consent did yeeld the prize
To Triamond and Cambell as the best.
But Triamond to Cambell it relest.
And Cambell it to Triamond transferd;
Each labouring t'aduanche the others gest,
And make his praise before his owne preferd:
So that the doome was to another day differd. (4.4.36.)

Even though friendship may be the "crown" of love, and of this tournament, it is nonetheless true that the tournament in general is devoted to the second degree of love.³ The virtue of friendship and the mutual exchanges between Cambel and Triamond, which occur when each renounces mastery, are exemplary standards of love in general. And therefore, Cambel and Triamond represent ideal behavior in love, and they set the standard which other lovers must try to emulate.

On the first day of the tournament Satyrane, the natural man, obtains the prize.⁴ On the second day the two friends are victorious. And on the final day Britomart wins by overthrowing Artegall, the natural knight who lacks finesse (4.4.39.)⁵ Out of the three days there are clearly four winners, two of whom "assist and yield to one another"⁶

2. The position of centrality is a place of honor: see Alastair Fowler; Triumphal Forms, Chapter 2, pp. 23 - 33. Also, it is conceivable that the central place (i.e., the second of three days) accorded to Cambel and Triamond in Satyrane's tournament suggests their function as double mean terms.
3. Satyrane's tournament is occasioned by the love of the knights for Florimell. The battles are, therefore, waged in celebration of the second degree of love. As it happens in the battle of canto three, so here: friendship obtains the prize as the highest love.
4. Satyrane's natural character is made explicit in (1.6.20 ff.) and (3.7.30 ff.).
5. Since Artegall is an Adonis figure, Spenser may have intended a pun when the first knight to attack him is so-called Sir Sangliere: in French, sanglier means a wild boar.
6. Fowler, Numbers, p. 178.

on the second day. The friends act like double mean terms within a tetrad whose extremes are the natural Satyrane and the chaste Britomart. Satyrane takes Artegall's rightful place in this tetrad because he represents all of the good qualities of nature which are in accord, or should be accorded with the artificial synthesis of Britomart. We often find that art is opposed to nature and that it is essentially vile when it grows to excesses; naturally I do not claim that Britomart's "art" is of that sort. Hers is the "art" that plays second part to nature, as in the Temple of Venus:-

For all that nature by her mother wit
 Could frame in earth, and forme of substance base,
 Was there, and all that nature did omit,
 Art playing second natures part, supplied it. (4.10.21.)

Art of this sort improves on nature. Britomart represents an artificial synthesis of masculine and feminine, and of Venus and Diana; and her lover must represent a natural force, like Satyrane. We have seen that Artegall's first encounter with Britomart in the tournament shows him to be a "natural" enough knight. Once he manages to obtain finesse he will be able to accord himself with Britomart. Thus, they will unite in a harmony which suggests a virtuous balance of nature and art.⁷ The artifice of chastity leading to marriage, as embodied in Britomart, should be apparent by now. But Artegall's association with nature has yet to be proved. Certainly it is true to say that the knight of justice supports the natural order of the world because this order reflects God's justice. When Artegall rejects the Giant's proposal

7. Artegall's lack of "finesse" is a lack of "art". Britomart, although virtuous, sustains her blend of chastity by artifice so long as she lacks a natural husband. Therefore, she possesses slightly too much "art" which will vanish in the marriage with Artegall; each excess and deficiency findin a resolution in the exchanges of marriage.

(5.2.30-54.) to reapportion the world according to the principles of equality, he does so with the realisation that the same:-

. . . . almighty hand, which created the world out of formless matter . . . (also) ordered all things by measure and number and weight.⁸

And therefore it is not given to man to question the order of the universe. Artegall, as the knight of justice, must clearly support the natural order.

The tetrad which we expect to be formed is therefore one which takes the following shape:

ARTEGALL:CAMBEL::TRIAMOND:BRITOMART

The two lovers are bound by the material Cambel and the spiritual Triamond, and they are accorded through friendship. The fact that this particular tetrad is anticipated in the tournament of the fourth canto is enough to prove that Spenser was working steadily toward a philosophical schema based on love and mutual accord.

In the fifth canto the feminine quest for beauty is examined. The brave deeds of the tournament are reduced to chaos through the seeds of dissention which have been planted by Ate and Duessa, and false beauty reigns with false friendship. Even Satyrane's attempts to find the "means" (4.4.25.) to establish concord fail, and the false Florimell willingly chooses the most despicable of all the assembled knights: Braggadochio. It is at this point that the strife of canto nine actually begins, for it is the loss of the false Florimell which stirs the knights to anger. In the midst of this mulling turmoil, which we can expect to erupt into general strife, we encounter the personal story of Scudamour and there is a particularly fine contrast between the general dissentions of the knights, and the particular sufferings of this lover.

8. Wisdom of Solomon 11.17.20.

The House of Care episode has been widely praised and perhaps one reason for its popularity is its placement against a background of turmoil. Even the hammers and anvils of Care's smiths are, to some measure, preferable to the ceaseless battles, pageants and squabbles of the knights from the book of friendship. The note of personal reflection however tortured, is a welcome rest to any reader who has "travelled" thus far through the book. Interestingly enough, it is this kind of scene which characterized the third book: Britomart's interior journey from Castle Joyous to the House of Busyrane; Florimell's confrontation with the Witch, the beast, the Fisher and the sea-god; and even the Garden of Adonis: all these episodes look inward and depict personal and individual states of mind. The stylistic difference between books three and four is simply that the stories of book three are generally like this episode of Scudamour in the House of Care: that is to say, they are individualised and personal accounts of some experience. In the fourth book this kind of story is the exception, and when it occurs we always see a larger, more generally turbulent landscape behind it. Even Florimell's story concludes with the immense sea pageant as an accompaniment: though by this time the chaos has changed into an orderly pageant. Having begun with the general turmoil of the knights caused by Ate's ripening "seeds" of dissention, the fifth canto concludes with the personal sufferings of Scudamour brought on, once again, by Ate.

ii

In the sixth canto many of the themes begin to reach a climax when both Scudamour and Artegall find Britomart revealed to them. Like Palamon, they both learn to adore her because of the power of love which she possesses:-

And you Sir Artegall, the saluage knight,
 Henceforth may not disdaine, that womans hand
 Hath conquered you anew in second fight:
 For whylome they haue conquered sea and land,
 And heauen it selfe, that nought may them withstand.
 He henceforth be rebellious unto love,
 That is the crowne of knighthood, and the band
 Of noble minds deriued from aboue,
 Which being knit with vertue, neuer will remoue. (4.6.31.)

We shall have to wait until the last two cantos of this book to see the results of love's infusion into the elements of the sea and land. But the accord of Artegall and Britomart by "virtue" is not long in coming; and when each partner yields mastery to the other we can assume that they have found the "means" symbolized by the friends Cambel and Triamond who continually "assist and yield to one another."⁹ Love is the "crown" of knighthood because it is given to man from God, and therefore, aids man in the noble pursuit of honor. There is a hierarchy in love, as the third canto has shown, and friendship is the highest and most spiritual of all. It is the "crown" of love. To surrender to love is, therefore, a positive step toward the more spiritual love of friendship and the wholly spiritual love of God.

It is, perhaps, justifiable to make a comparison between this surrender to love, and the false attempts of Busyrane to force Amoret's surrender in the closing cantos of book three. Artegall is, at first, as bold as Scudamour. But unlike that knight he learns to restrain

9. Fowler, Numbers, p. 178.

himself and to yield the mastery which Scudamour would retain:-

Yet durst he not make loue so suddenly,
 Ne thinke th'affection of her hart to draw
 From one to other so quite contrary:
 Besides her modest countenance he saw
 So goodly graue, and full of princely aw,
 That it his ranging fancie did refraine,
 And looser thoughts to lawfull bounds withdraw;
 Whereby the passion grew more fierce and faine,
 Like to a stubborne steede whom strong hand would
 restraine. (4.6.33.)

It is this kind of lawful restraint which distinguishes Artegall from Scudamour, and as a result Britomart's heart is pierced, not by the hideous dart of Busyrane, but by a "lovely dart." (4.6.40.)

The various battle scenes of the fourth book have their associations with the battle in the "Knight's Tale," and the anticipated battle of the Squire's Tale. Each time we encounter a stadium we may properly ask ourselves if we are about to witness an allegory of life taking place within its walls. And in the sixth canto we encounter another reminder of Chaucer in the religious devotion accorded to Britomart by Scudamour and Artegall. Each knight worships her for the same reasons that Palamon worshipped Emelye: she represents the natural potential of love:-

And he (Artegall) himselfe long gazing thereupon,
 At last fell humbly downe vpon his knee,
 And of his wonder made religion,
 Weening some heavenly goddess he did see . . .
 (4.6.22.)

.

Which when as Scudamour, who now abrayd,
 Beheld, whereas he stood not farre aside,
 He was therewith right wondrously dismayd,
 And drawing nigh, when as he plaine describe
 That peerelesse paterne of Dame natures pride,
 And heavenly image of perfection,
 He blest himselfe, as one sore terrifide,
 And turning his feare to faint deuotion,
 Did worship her as some celestiall vision.
 (4.6.24.)

This is precisely Palamon's reaction to Emelye as he sees her walking

in the May garden, and Spenser's intent is surely to demonstrate that Britomart, like Emelye and like Canacee, is potentially fruitful because of her harmony with nature. It is the blend of chastity and natural fecundity which makes these heroines the "peereless paterne of Dame natures pride."

Perhaps one of the most important doctrines to come from the sixth canto is the confirmation that friendship is, in its purest state, masculine; and that love is, again, in its purest state, feminine. The most significant exception to the rule has been Britomart's friendship with Amoret, and thus, it has seemed that friendship is as natural to femininity as to masculinity. But the exception is only apparent, because we are told that Britomart's friend, and therefore her friendship, is second in importance to her love:-

. . . she went to seeke faire Amoret,
Her second care . . . (4.6.46.)

Spenser's lesson is simply that the feminine nature excels in love and generates more by uniting with the masculine nature - thereby forming a "higher" friendship than would ordinarily be possible with another lady. Masculinity, however, can excell in masculine friendship without the need of femininity except as a power for material generation. Femininity provides material potential; masculinity provided spiritual potential. The purest love of friendship infuses all the other loves with spiritual purpose. Britomart's first care must be her love for Artegall inasmuch as it allows the material perfection of her own nature and, at the same time, infuses her with spiritual purpose. Even if we admit that her friendship with Amoret could provide spiritual purpose, we should have to recognize that neither Britomart nor Amoret could achieve the material fulfilment of their own natures through their own friendship alone. For women, the friendship imparted by the second degree of love is the highest kind.

iii

In cantos seven, eight and nine, various stories come into contact with one another and begin to work themselves out toward their resolutions. The stories of Amoret, Belpheobe and Timias are brought together, and it is also within these cantos that Arthur reappears, and manages to establish concord out of discord. While it is certainly true that Ate's seeds of dissension become most threatening in these cantos, and that many incidents of discord and chaos are seen to happen, yet Arthur's appearance indicates that Ate's reign is coming to a close.

The sixth canto marks a division between the two halves of the fourth book: particularly from the first appearance of Ate to the first appearance of Concord in Venus' temple.¹⁰ Notcutt¹¹ pointed out the important contrast between Ate and Concord, (4.1.19-20; and 4.10.23, 34.) and he insisted on the essential symmetry of the book which is not only indicated by the balance of Ate and Concord, but by the contrasts and balances between certain episodes on either side of the fulcrum-like sixth canto:-

The sixth canto . . . occupies . . . a central place in this group of contrasted incidents . . .

First, we notice that the feigned friendship of Blandamour and Paridell contrasts with the true and virtuous friendship of Amyas and Placidus; next Canacee aids men with the power of her rod of peace and the drink of nepenthe, and in so doing she contrasts with Arthur's aid of women with his sword and drink; and finally, the appearance of the golden girdle leads the knights of Satyrane's tournament to discord, while

10. Notcutt, "The Faerie Queen and its Critics," cited in Variorum Spenser, IV, pp. 298 - 301.

11. Notcutt, Spenser Variorum, IV, pp. 298 - 301.

the appearance of the dove and ruby heart leads Timias out of the chaos of his despair.¹³

One could respectfully add more contrasts and balances that Notcutt was willing to disclose. H. S. V. Jones¹⁴ mentioned the likely contrast between Cambel and Triamond, and Amyas and Placidus, on the basis of a distinction between "mystical" and "romance" friendships.

Notcutt and Jones are both correct, for, if we extend Notcutt's analysis of the contrast between the evolving chaos of the tournament and the evolving concord of the Timias-Belphoebe story, and apply it to the whole disposition of the cantos balanced by canto six, we are not far from the truth. The first five cantos demonstrate the insidious power of Ate: in these episodes we generally see how dissension gains a foothold in a society - with the obvious exception of canto three which demonstrates the opposite. The continuous stories of book four come closer to chaos as they near the sixth canto. Once the sixth canto is passed, the seeds may, in fact, cause even greater strife than before, but, the difference is that the seeds of Concord have been sowed and, little by little, the strife of Ate is replaced by the harmony of Concord.

Where Jones was right was in his recognition of the contrast between "mystical" and "romance" themes. Again, it is useful to extend this distinction to cover the wider balance of cantos. In the first five cantos, friendship and love in general are given the full mystical treatment in the episodes of Triamond and Cambel, particularly cantos three and four; but after canto six the mysticism of the earlier episodes gives place to romance theses. Even the Temple of Venus is more

13. Notcutt, Variorum Spenser, IV, pp. 299 - 300.

14. H. S. V. Jones, A Spenser Handbook, cited in Variorum Spenser, IV, pp. 301 - 305.

"romantic" than "mystical"; more traditional than consciously philosophical. We rely on previous knowledge to recognize the vast importance of Dame Concord and her separation of the brothers love and hate, as Edgar Wind noticed when he contrasted the unfolding of the brothers Priamond, Diamond, and Triamond, with the infolding of "opposites into one".¹⁵ In brief, where mystical themes exist in the second half of book four they are subservient to romance themes, and where romance intrudes into the first half of the book, it is subservient to a predominant philosophical mysticism. This does not imply that one must dismiss what ever mystical kinds of themes are encountered in the last half of the book. Instead, we are meant to perceive their importance because the first half of the book has educated us in this respect.

The romantic elements which characterize the stories of Belpheobe and Amoret in canto seven serve to veil an underlying mysticism which gives depth and meaning to these episodes without intruding with the same kind obvious pedanticism which makes "poets into pedants."¹⁶ It is perhaps best to remark that if Spenser required a "heavy hand" in constructing his philosophy, it is just as well to have it packed into one or two cantos and have it over and done with. One could easily dismiss canto three as bad poetry so long as it were admitted that canto ten is especially "good" poetry: and my point is that the Temple of Venus episode relies on the third canto for its fullest depth and meaning just as the romanticism of canto seven is more successful because of the unobtrusive philosophical foundation upon which it rests.

15. Wind, Pagan Mysteries, p. 211

16. Wind, Pagan Mysteries, p. 210

It is obvious that Amoret and Belphebe are opposite types.

Amoret was raised by Venus in the Garden of Adonis and the Temple of Venus. Belphebe was taken in charge by Diana. Each sister possesses some kind of strength which is lacking in the other, just as each possesses a weakness which the other is not subject to. We have seen, further, that Britomart represents a synthesis of Amoret and Belphebe: their powers and weaknesses are accorded, and infolded, within the knight of chastity. Hence, the chance meeting between the sisters cannot be entirely explained away as a romantic incident - like that of Ariosto at his best. Nor can we possibly escape the necessary fact that the first meeting is also a first step toward the eventual accord of the sisters which has long been symbolized in Britomart herself. When the sisters meet in the forest the romance cannot hide the fact that we are witnessing the beginning of just such a synthesis.

That Amoret gains something - a kind of strength - from meeting Belphebe is immediately apparent. Her chaste sister saves her from the beast of lust who, we have no doubt, was capable of consuming her. But, as I have implied, the story is not one sided and Belphebe must therefore obtain some quality from Amoret in order to complete the mystical exchange. In one as high minded as Belphebe it would be inappropriate to implant jealousy. Disdain is a better and more acceptable way of showing the sufferings of a noble mind beginning to love. If Amoret received the strength of chastity, Belphebe begins to accept a loving warmth. This is how we should interpret the scene which describes Belphebe's disdain:-

Which when she saw, with sodaine glauncing eye,
 Her noble heart with sight thereof was fild
 With Deepe disdaine, and with great indignity,
 That in her wrath she though them both haue thrild,
 With that selfe arrow, which the Carle had kild:
 Yet held her wrathfull hand from vengeance sore,
 But drawing nigh, ere he her well beheld;
 Is this the faith, she said, and said no more,
 But turnd her face, and fletd away for euermore.
 (4.7.36.)

It is fairly certain that Spenser envisaged a marriage between Timias and Belphoebe. We can also guess why the story was put off and never completed when we call to mind the proem stanza from book three which says:-

But either Gloriana let her chuse,
 Or in Belphoebe fashioned to bee:
 (3.proem 5)

for in these lines Spenser associated Belphoebe with Queen Elizabeth I.

Amoret's story in the seventh canto is important not only because of the mystical exchange which takes place between Belphoebe and herself, but because it helps to clarify the direction and meaning of certain of the other continuing stories. From the invocation of stanzas one and two of canto seven we understand that Amoret's story differs from the stories of Britomart and Florimell in an extremely important way:-

Great God of loue, that with thy cruell dart
 Doest conquer greatest conquerors on ground,
 And setst the kingdome in the captiue harts
 Of Kings and Keasars, to thy seruice bound,
 What glorie, or what guerdon hast thou found
 In feeble Ladies tyranning so sore;
 And adding anguish to the bitter wound,
 With Which their liues thou lanchdest long afore,
 By heaping stormes of trouble on them daily more?

So whylome didst thou to faire Florimell;
 And so and so to noble Britomart;
 So doest thou now to her, of whom I tell,
 The louely Amoret, whose gentle hart
 Thou martyrest with sorow and with smart,
 In saluage forrests, and in deserts wide . . .
 (4.7.1-2)

Amoret has already suffered from Cupid's mastery in the House of Busyrane, and yet we are now told that he is about to endure a trial to which both Britomart and Florimell have been subject before her. We must recall that Amoret's experience in love is exactly the opposite of both Britomart's and Florimell's inasmuch as she has been under constant pressure from her over-bold lover, while the other maidens have had to suffer a lover's indifference. Given the inevitable fact that the same "ground" is covered by all lovers, and that Amoret has already suffered the mental anguish of the House of Busyrane, it is apparent that her new trial - the one which Britomart and Florimell have both experienced already - is a fleshly one. Britomart and Florimell came to the Fleshly trials first, and the mental ones later, because both were attracted to indifferent lovers; Amoret came to the mental trials first because, in quite the opposite way, love was thrust upon her. Now, when she has finally conquered the mental trials, she must yet endure the fleshly ones.

This interpretation would associate Amoret's present sufferings with Florimell's in, and just after, her sojourn in the Witch's cabin; and with Britomart's in the palace placed for "pleasure" near to the forest. We have already encountered the imagery of the wild "wandering" forest which is to serve as the background for Amoret's experiences (4.7.2-4.). And further, we find that the monster which captures Amoret is reminiscent of the Witch's monster which pursues Florimell. Both, for example, serve the same general purpose:-

For on the spoile of women he doth liue,
Whose bodies chast, when euer in his powre
He may them ctach, vnable to gainestriue,
He with his shamefull lust doth first deflowre,
And afterwards themselues doth cruelly deuoure.
(4.7.12.)

And, in the earlier episode we find the monster to be:-

An hideous beast, of horrible aspect . . .
That feeds on womens flesh, as others feede on gras.
(3.7.22.)

and pursues Florimell until he has:-

. . . quite deuourd her beauties scornfull grace.
(3.7.23.)

Both monsters have the capability of catching up with their victims, and it is not coincidence that Amoret and Florimell are both likened to Myrrha and Daphne as they flee the lustful force pursuing them.¹⁷

Again, the reference to these mythical characters is made simply to indicate two kinds of extremes in love, and not to suggest that either maiden is about to "die" in lust, like Myrrha. The choice between lust and death no longer applies so long as the synthesis of chastity and pleasure is possible. Thus, the real point of both stories is that lust can drive a maiden to the irreconcilable choice between the kinds of things that Myrrha and Daphne represent; but that the synthesis of chastity and pleasure which occurs in marriage offers a divinely inspired third choice. Thus, in the midst of Florimell's flight she is saved by divine ordinance:-

Not halfe so fast the wicked Myrrha fled
From dread of her reuenging fathers hond:
Nor halfe so fast to saue her maidenhed,
Fled fearefull Daphne on th'Aegaeon stround,
As Florimell fled from that Monster yond,
To reach the sea, ere she of him were raught:
For in the sea to drowne her selfe she fond,
Rather then of the tyrant to be caught:
Thereto feare gaue her wings, and neede her courage taught.

It fortun'd (high God did so ordaine)
As she arriued on the soring shore,
In minde to leape into the mighty maine,
A little boate lay houting her before . . .
(3.7.26-7.)

17. Compare (4.7.22.) with (3.7.26.)

And in the midst of Amoret's struggles she is saved by the sister whose presence, alone, is enough to give Amoret the power to form the synthesis of pleasure and chastity:-

Nor hedge, nor ditch, nor hill, nor date she staies,
 But ouerleapes them all, like Robucke light,
 And through the thickest makes her highest waies;
 And euermore when with regardfull sight
 She looking backe, espies that griesly wight
 Approaching high, she gins to mend her pace,
 And makes her feare a spur to hast her flight;
 More swift then Myrrh' or Daphne in her race,
 Or any of the Thracian Nimphes in saluage chase.

Long so she fled, and so he follow'd long;
 Ne liuing aide for her on earth appeares,
 But if the heauens helpe to redresse her wrong,
 Moued with pity of her plenteous teares.
 It fortun'd Belphoebe with her peares . . .
 Was hunting then . . . (4.7.22-3.)

In both cases there is a divine intervention because marriage is the divinely inspired solution to the problems of both Florimell and Amoret. The obvious association of Florimell's chase with Amoret's should enable us to argue that both ladies are suffering the same kind of trial by fleshly lust, and that both are saved from the terrible choice facing them by divine intervention. The other events in the Amoret story - Timias' destructive aid and Slander's derision - show the after-effects of her trials. But since she has already endured the mental torture of Busyrane's house, we can now expect her story to conclude happily.

The eighth and ninth cantos are largely devoted to the non-continuous sotry of Amyas and Placidus. Again, the "Knight's Tale" may have been a source, but in general the story of Titus and Gisippus fits best here. Certainly, the moral exemplum which is derived from this story - i.e., that friendship is the highest love - is of certain value to the fourth book. The Titus-Gisippus story, as Elyot tells it in the Governor, concerns two friends who fall in love with the same woman. As in the "Knight's Tale," the central dilemma is how to resolve the resulting conflict between the love of friends, and the love of women. But instead of breaking into the kind of strife which typified the "Knight's Tale", we find that friendship is capable of resolving the problem through one person's gentillesse. Gisippus allows Titus to take his place on the wedding night, and thereby consummate the wedding and gain the bride. In this way Gisippus sacrifices the woman he loves for the friend he loves even more.

In Spenser's adaption of the story, Placidus offers his services to his friend Amyas and, by doing so, he acts virtuously like Gisippus and saves the friendship as well as the other love. Whether it is by intention or by coincidence, this story also runs counter to most of the truly significant details of the "Knight's Tale." Placidus willingly puts himself in prison for his friend; he, furthermore, willingly places himself at the disposal of the lady Poena - whom both despise as unvirtuous; and finally, the two friends are saved not by the fortune which dooms one to death and the other to life, but by the fortunate intervention of Arthur who helps to slay Poena's father, Corflambo. The unwilling captivity of the knights of the "Knight's Tale," the chastity of Emelye, and the virtue of Theseus, contrast with the willing captivity in Spenser's story, the unchaste Poena, and the

unvirtuous Corflambo. Altogether, the story shows the immediate problem of the force of lust in love because Amelia is brought into the power of Amoret's "monster" of lust through her love of Amyas; and Amyas is made the captive of Corflambo. Thus, both lovers have been enslaved by forces of lust, and only the gentillesse of Placidus is capable of releasing them and reorganizing the situation. When Placidus agrees to take Amyas' place in prison and to substitute himself for his friend, he also agrees to serve Poena. In the end, Amyas and Amelia are reunited, and Poena reforms and unites with Placidus. And thus, another tetradic harmony of friends and lovers is formed. Friendship is clearly the one force capable of resolving the problems of love, and once again we recognize the occurrence of a mystical exchange when Placidus takes up his friend's role:-

There did I finde mine onely faithfull frend
In heavy plight and sad perplexitie;
Whereof I sorie, yet my selfe did bend,
Him to recomfort with my companie.
But him the more agreeu'd I found thereby;
For all his ioy, he said, in that distresse
Was mine and his AEmylias libertie.
AEmylia well he lou'd, as I mote gheese;
Yet greater loue to me then her he did professe.

But I with better reason him eniz'd,
And shew'd him how through error and mis-thought
Of our like persons eath to be disguiz'd,
Or his exchange (my italics) or freedome might be
wrought.
Whereto full loth was he, ne would for ought
Consent, that I who stood all fearelesse free,
Should wilfully be into thraldome brought,
Till fortune did perforce it so decree.
Yet ouerrul'd at last, he did to me agree.
(4.8.57-8.)

Friendship is capable of manipulating the "means" of this tetrad through an exchange which can totally reform it: Amyas and Placidus act as the means of the tetrad, and through their exchange Amelia and Poena are brought virtuously together as the wives of the two friends. Significantly enough the stanzas on the three degrees of love occur as an invocation to this story (4.9.1-2.)

The tetradic harmony of this "romance" friendship is comparable with the earlier tetrad from the mystical third canto. But in the ninth canto we find the false tetrad of false friends which acts out Ate's strife. There are four "friends" involved and each has an important place within the false harmony. The extremes, as we first see them, are composed of Druon and Paridell; the means are Claribell and Blandamour:-

| | | | |
|----------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| <u>DRUON</u> : | <u>BLANDAMOUR</u> : | : <u>CLARIBELL</u> | <u>PARADELL</u> : |
| no love | inconstant | loves out | lusts after |
| for | lover | of | all |
| women | | measure | |

The friendship of these false knights is obviously counterfeited, and therefore, although the means and extremes seem to fit the usual pattern of the tetrad, there can be no real stability here. Instead, the "friends" whirl around in battle with one another, changing sides in order to prolong the strife, and threatening to restore Chaos itself:-

As when Dar AEolus in great displeasure,
 For losse of his deare loue by Neptune hent,
 Sends forth the winds out of his hidden treasure,
 Vpon the sea to wreake his fell intent;
 They braking forth with rude vnruliment,
 From all foure parts of heauen doe rage full sore,
 And tosse the deepes, and teare the firmament,
 And all the world confound with wide vprore,
 As if in stead thereof they Chaos would restore.

There gan they change their sides, and new parts take;
 For Paridell did take to Druons side,
 For ald despight, which now forth newly brake
 Gainst Blandamour, whom alwaies he enuide
 And Blandamour to Claribell relide.
 So all afresh gan former fight renew.

(4.9.23 & 26.)

The reference to the God of winds reminds us of Britomart's prayer to him in the third book (3.4.10.) and we may therefore accept the suggestion of two kinds of chaos symbolized in his power: that in the

destruction of the world at large, and that in destruction of love. Clearly, if the world is ordered through the force of love, then it can be destroyed through the destruction of love.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: "Temple of Venus"

The number ten is a symbol of perfection. Unlike other numbers which appear to change in meaning according to almost any point of view, the monad and decad are entirely stable.¹ It is reasonable to assume, in a poem like the Faerie Queene, that the tenth canto of any given book will contain an episode of suitable virtue, or of medullar importance, to correspond with a number of such unvarying superiority. But we have already noted the one exception in Malbecco's House (3.10.--.) and it is now time to deal fully with this as we take up the question of Temple of Venus in the tenth canto of book four.

I intend to prove that the House of Malbecco is rightfully placed in the tenth canto and that its *raison d'etre* lies in its contrast with the Temple of Venus. Spenser meant to balance Malbecco's House with Venus' Temple in precisely the same way that many other episodes are balanced within the fourth book. We recall that books three and four must always be considered as one unit, or even one complete book, and therefore the contrast I suggest is a de facto internal one. That is to say that although episodes are being compared from different books, yet we may assume nonetheless that each episode shares precisely the same overall context: the love debate. It might also be valuable to recall that the 1-6-11,12 canto structure exists in book four, and therefore it is never wrong to suspect that the like numbered cantos of books three and four may have some important relationship with one another. Even the fact that Florimell's chase occupies the same numbered canto of book three as Amoret's in book four is significant

1. Vincent Foster Hopper, Medieval Number Symbolism, see esp. Chapter 3, "Pythagorean Number Theory," pp.33 - 49.

once the other similarities are noted between these episodes.

The tenth cantos of books three and four both describe the attempts of a lover to enter a castle which holds a beautiful woman. Paridell wins his way into Malbecco's house with Britomart's help; and Scudamour fights his way into the Temple of Venus with the aid of Cupid's shield. In each case the lover attempts to steal the lady away from her protector. Paridell steals Hellenore away from the jealous husband, Malbecco; Scudamour steals Amoret from the "church" which is protected by Venus. And significantly, Paridell flatters and employs "art" to win his lady, while Scudamour is notably lacking in such devices. And there is the interesting "cross-reference" between these courtships when Cupid smiles on the artful lover in Malbecco's House, and Venus smiles on the natural one in the Temple:-

So perfect in that art was Paridell,
That he Malbeccoes halfen eye did wyle,
His halfen eye he wiled wondrous well,
And Hellenors both eyes did eke beguyle,
Both eyes and hart attonce, during the whyle,
That he there sojourned his wounds to heale;
That Cupid selfe it seeing, close did smyle,
To weet how he her loue away did steale,
And bad, that none their ioyous treason should reueale.

The learned louer lost no time nor tyde . . .
(3.10.5,6.)

If Paridell was hasty in stealing his lady, and if he felt no compunctions about "laying her aboard" (3.10.6.), we certainly have his opposite number in Scudamour who is reticent to steal Amoret and who hesitates. Nonetheless, Venus smiles on him:-

Whom soone as I beheld, my hart gan throb,
And wade in doubt, what best were to be donne:
For sacrilege me seem'd the Church to rob,
And folly seem's to leaue the thing vndonne,
Which with so strong attempt I had begonne.

And euermore vpon the Goddesse face
Mine eye was fixt, for feare of her offence,
Whom when I saw with amiable grace
To laugh at me, and fauour my pretence,
I was emboldned . . . (4.10.53,56.)

These comparisons reveal, perhaps, as much about the differences between books three and four as about the two courtships themselves. Although both books discuss love, book three is ruled by Cupid, or at least his power is rife (i.e., in Castle Joyous, in the House of Malbecco, in the House of Busyrane). In book four art plays second nature's part, Cupid is properly balanced and subdued by Venus, and lovers of all kinds unite to remake the order of the world and universe through the two kinds of generation: spiritual and material. In book three we see mostly concupiscence and its consequences; in book four we find all of the various sides of love brought within a stable harmony. Paridell's courtship is all artful concupiscence with no substance. The implications of diseased love are elegantly implied by the names of the characters in this story, and by the decadent outcome of Hellenore who descends to the level of a beast. Scudamour's courtship represents, on the other hand, the more virtuous kind. Cupid is represented not in person, but by a shield. Venus dominates the Temple and it is clear that she accepts Scudamour because he will support the natural order of the world through the generation of a fruitful lineage. But, Venus' approval is as self-serving as Cupid's, and in both cases, whatever approval is given does no guarantee the happiness of the lovers involved. Troy falls again and a house is ruined by Cupid's smile; Amoret is brought within the bitter house of Busyrane to reap the reward of Venus' smile.

At least one of the contrasted dualities which is evident in these courtships is that of art and nature: in Paridell's artful ways, and Scudamour's natural approach. The third book continues the discussion of art and nature, giving art a dominant place throughout - except in the Garden of Adonis where nature seems to prevail. In the fourth

book, art and nature are accorded along with several other polarities. In Scudamour we observe a knight who could use more art, for it would temper his boldness; in Paridell we find the opposite: a knight who needs the substance of natural affection to temper his art.

The foregoing analysis has not attempted to suggest that the whole of the Malbecco-Hellenore episode should be compared with the Temple of Venus episode. Obviously the story serves its own purposes within its own book: primarily, Malbecco is a type of jealousy and his wife is a type of adulterous woman. If there are further comparisons to be made between this episode and the later one we have been discussing, then one of them might be that Malbecco is a warning to all possessive lovers who, like Scudamour, believe their ladies to be theirs by "right." Perhaps the fine indecision of Malbecco, when he sees both his gold and his wife threatened, is lesson enough. Such mastery in love is analogous to a miser's greed and all lovers would do well to eschew it. The mastery of Malbecco leads us directly to Scudamour and the House of Busyrane in the eleventh and twelfth cantos of book three. Thus, the Malbecco episode is not only comparable to the Temple of Venus, by way of a warning to lovers, but it also points to its own direction, and in particular, to Scudamour. Surely the comparison of Malbecco's house to two other episodes, both of which concern Scudamour directly, is more than coincidence.

Paridell's courtship is a parody of Scudamour's. In one courtship a concupiscent lover steals a lascivious lady out of the lap of miserly jealousy, and Cupid smiles on the attempt. In the other situation the lover desires honor, not the dishonor of concupiscence. He is true, not false, and he employs little art to win his lady out of the lap of

Womanhood. Venus, seeing that he serves her natural order, smiles on the attempt. However much we may enjoy Paridell's falsehood - and we do enjoy it because Spenser has taken care to make the episode entertaining - we must feel genuinely sorry for Amoret because we know of her sufferings in the House of Busyrane. Ironically we may laugh at the wiles of Paridell and grieve for the sorrow of the true lovers: but then, Belpheobe has said:-

Who so in pompe of proud estate . . .
 Does swim, and bathes himselfe in courtly blis,
 Does waste his dayes in darke obscuritie,
 And in obliuious euer buried is:
 Where ease abounds, yt's eath to doe amis;
 But who his limbs with labours, and in his mind
 Behaues with cares, cannot so easie mis.
 Abroad in armes, at home in studious kind
 Who seekes with painfull toile, shall honor soonest
 find. (2.3.40.)

Virtuous love is not easy to accomplish.

The story of Scudamour seems to owe much to the court of love for its detailed analysis of a lover's experiences. The knight wins his way into the castle grounds where he finds a garden of delight which seems a second paradise. His progress is checked by the personified dangers of Danger, Doubt, Delay. After several trials, and much fortitude on the part of the lover, Venus is enlisted to his aid and he wins the lady. The account begins with a traditional complaint against the vicissitudes of love:-

True he it said, what euer man it say's,
 That loue with gall and hony doth abound,
 But if the one be with the other wayd,
 For euery dram of hony therein found,
 A pound of gall doth ouer it redound. (4.10.1.)

and thankfully, Spenser is not as long winded as Reason from the Roman de la Rose.²

2. Romaunt of the Rose, 11. 4685 ff. Chaucer's translation, cited from the Works, ed. Robinson, p. 609.

We learn that the lover is a young man who has just come of age, for he tells us that he had just "taken Arms" when he heard of Amoret's fame:-

What time the fame of this renowned prise
Flew first abroad, and all mens eares possest,
I hauing armes then taken . . . (4.10.4.)

His youth is, therefore, accountable for some of his difficulties in love. And further, since he openly claims to desire honor, his way will not be easy.

These are some of the details which can claim a court of love "heritage!" But in addition the Temple of Venus bears a significant relationship to the Garden of Adonis because of the existence of Amoret, herself, who was brought up in the Garden and "schooled"³ in the Temple. And therefore, while it is good to notice the traditional elements of the story, it is also well to insist that the story is not merely traditional: often we are meant to compare other incidents throughout the third and fourth books with this immensely important episode.

The relationship between the Garden and the Temple is self-evident so long as Amoret's place in both is considered. In the Garden Amoret learned of pleasure and was brought up according to the most natural of laws. As a result, the Garden's fruitfulness has become her own. But in the temple, where nature and art are accorded, Amoret learns how to bring her natural warmth and potential fecundity into line with social reality (art). In both the Garden and Temple, however, there is a greater emphasis on nature's laws and on the generation of lineage. To a certain extent Venus' smile is given to Scudamour before Amoret's lesson is fully learned, and therefore she will come to the House of

3. C. S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love, p. 343.

Busyrane. Venus clearly shows that Amoret's fecundity is more important than her understanding of the amorous warfare which has caught her up. The images of this fecundity were discovered in the "mount" and "arbor" of the Garden; in the Temple we find further expressions of it. The reference to "doric" pillars⁴ suggests that the entrance to the castle has been fashioned according to masculine proportions, involving yet again the mystical number seven:-

The Doric column is seven measures of the diameter in height . . . (it is) "manlike in appearance, bare, unadorned . . ."5

I would tend to agree with Hamilton's summary of the lover's progress since he recognizes that it is a penetration of the lady's defences which expresses the "triumph of love and the triumph over love:"⁶

The characteristic motion of Spenser's allegory is a moving ever inward, penetrating ever more deeply until we achieve some vision of perfection at the centre.⁷

The penetration is worked out on two levels, then: there is the actual penetration of intercourse, symbolised by the lover's progress; and there is the psychological penetration of the loved one's defences. The anatomical imagery exists to demonstrate the kind of service into which the lover is entering. The Temple's Venus is a Venus Genetrix who serves Nature by bidding all creatures to increase and multiply. To Venus, then, Scudamour is simply representative of the male seed entering the womb to fulfil this decree. Amoret's place in the lap of

4. (4.10.6.)

5. Fowler, quoting Vitruvius in Numbers, p. 264.

6. Hamilton, Structure of Allegory, p. 164.

7. Hamilton, Structure of Allegory, p. 164.

Womanhood suggests simply that she is ready to serve nature's laws. On this level the Temple's Venus is as "material" as the Garden's; but remembering that nature comprises only one side of this Venus' power makes us expect that she is the greater force. There are friends as well as lovers in her Temple gardens, and art accords well with nature in this place (4.10.21-29.). This Venus transcends the merely material and natural roles which characterized the Garden's Venus.

Once the sexual imagery is noticed it is easy to regard the episode as a celebration of fertility. Scudamour is a kind of Everyman whose journey relates the marriage of masculine form with feminine material creativity; in a sense he, too, must "die" before entering the kingdom. But although this level of allegory is important, it is probably true that most of the episode is concerned with the other variant of penetration: the psychological.

Scudamour's jousting with the twenty knights on the open plain is an account of his power to defeat Amoret's many suitors and come to her notice by capturing the shield of Cupid:-

Blessed the man that well can vse his blis:
Whose euer be the shield, faire Amoret be his.
 (4.10.8.)

And the entrance into the Bridge gate is reminiscent of the lover's entry into the Garden of Mirth in the Roman de la Rose:-

Yet I perseuer'd still to knocke and call,
 Till at the last I spide within the same,
 Where one stood peeping through a creuis small,
 To whom I cald aloud . . . (4.10.11.)

In the Temple, it is the figure of Doubt who appears behind the door and in the Romaunt of the Rose it is "Ydelnesse:"

. . . I fond a wicket small
 So shett, that I ne myght in gon,
 And other entre was ther noon.

Uppon this dore I gan to smyte,
 That was fetys and so lite;
 For other wey coude I not seke.⁸

The major difference between the lover of the Romaunt and Scudamour is that the former is not yet committed to any particular love, while Scudamour is.

Because of this commitment Scudamour is able to encounter and pass by the major defences of Doubt, Delay and Danger (4.10.12-20.). Again, as in the Romaunt of the Rose, Danger seems to be the most threatening of all.⁹

The garden of love is drawn directly and indirectly from a wealth of traditional material: Eden in the Bible, and from Dante's Purgatorio; the garden of Mirth and the Garden of the Shepherd in the Roman de la Rose; and the gardens in Chaucer's poetry.

It seem'd a second paradise to gheese (4.10.23.)
 should, therefore, strike us as being as traditional in these circumstances as a list of trees:-

Thus hauling past all perill, I was come
 Within the compasse of that Islands space;
 The which did seeme vnto my simple doome
 The onely pleasant and delighfull place,
 That euer troden was of footings trace.
 For all that nature by her mother wit
 Could frame in earth, and forme of substance base,
 Was there, and all that nature did omit,
 Art playing second natures part, supplied it.

No tree, that is of count, in greenewood growes,
 From lowest Iuniper to Ceder tall,
 No flowre in field, that daintie odour throwes,
 And deckes his branch with blossomes ouer all,
 But there was planted, or grew naturall:
 Nor sense of man so coy and curious nice,
 But there mote find to please it selfe withall;
 Nor hart could wish for any quient deuice,
 But there it present was, and did fraile sense entice

In such luxurious plentie of all pleasure,
 It seem'd a second paradise to gheese . . . (4.10.21-3.)

8. Chaucer, Romaunt of the Rose, Works, 11. 528-33, p. 570.

9. (4.10.16-17.) and Chaucer, Romaunt of the Rose, Works, ed. Robinson, 11. 3015 ff., p. 593.

But once again we must not allow our recognition of traditional elements to obscure the fact that the pleasure of this garden is real and genuine, as opposed to the false and vicious pleasure of Acrasia's Bower where art triumphed over nature. And further, these gardens are better for mankind than the Gardens of Adonis where all art was banished. Scudamour's observations are traditional, and meaningful in terms of the Faerie Queene

The lover's reaction to the groups of friends, seen strolling in the garden, suggests his rejection of the higher love of friendship because of his single-minded purpose to capture Amoret. He is sensitive to the value of the higher love - he recognizes its beauty - but:-

. . . all those sights, and all that else I saw,
Might not my steps withhold, but that forthright
Vnto that purposd place I did me draw,
Where as my loue was lodged day and night:
The temple of great Venus . . . (4.10.29.)

To reject the higher love of friendship and substitute the material love of women by an "either - or" situation is to reject spiritual eternity in preference for material eternity through lineage: the choice is very much one of life and death, and the image of Orpheus which concludes the story of Scudamour's courtship, drives the point home.¹⁰ Scudamour must learn that friendship has its place in marriage, as well. One of love's most abiding rules is that of the exercise of patience, and Scudamour transgresses by being too bold.

10. Perhaps the "backward looke" in (4.10.20.) is another ominous sign. See especially (4.10.58.) where Scudamour's association with Orpheus is made explicit.

In the Hymne in Honour of Love we find that Love is responsible for confronting the Chaos which held the "worlds still moving mightie masse" and for constructing out of "loued meanes" a harmony of the confused elements.¹¹ Creation was therefore an act of love, as it is in the Bible. But further we recognize that this act of creation, as described in Spenser's Hymne, is not an isolated event inasmuch as the world continues to reconstruct this harmony with each generation. Love, therefore, plays the role of Concord in this world, and as long as all follow the decrees of nature by seeking to enlarge their progenies, the world can maintain the strained harmony which love continues to enforce. Scudamour's entrance into Venus' Temple is certainly on this level. He is a young knight who has come to claim the potentially fertile Amoret, and therefore he is welcomed by Dame Concord. By serving love, he serves Concord's strained harmony. And when Venus gives her assent to the lover's "sacrilege" (4.10.43.) of robbing the church, it is once again the result of her agreement with the laws of nature that makes her so so. What Scudamour lacks is the knowledge that man transcends the functions of generation by virtue of his higher mind. The entire story of Scudamour tends to reduce the knight to the level of a beast insofar as his boldness is always a sexual boldness, and Amoret's fears are commonly, if not always, fears of sexual penetration. Spenser's lesson is summed up in the Hymne to Love:-

Thereby they all do liue, and moued are
To multiply the likeness of their kynd,
Whylest they seeke onely, without further care,
To quench the flame, which they in burning fynd:
But man, that breathes a more immortall mynd,
Not for lusts sake, but for eternitie,
Seekes to enlarge his lasting progenie. (HL 99-105)

11. Hymn to Heavenly Love, 11. 52-98.

It is Scudamour's youth which causes his excessive boldness, and which virtually blinds him to the relevance of the "friends" who stroll through Venus' gardens. He need not have chosen between friendship and love. But since he is:-

. . . forst to seeke (his) . . . lifes deare patronesse
(4.10.28.)

because of the fire of love which burns within him, he is a perfectly acceptable suitor in the eyes of Dame Concord and of the Hermaphrodite Venus. Whatever harms may result from Scudamour's immature rejection of friendship are of no consequence to nature; and it is Dame Nature whom Venus and Concord serve.

Since both Concord and Venus serve Dame Nature, and since Scudamour's love is a love of material beauty, then it is reasonable to assume that the Temple, which "goodly frame" (4.10.31.) Scudamour admires so much, symbolizes the "goodly frame" of this world. Scudamour's love makes him aware of the strained harmony which exists in the world, and thus he encounters this force at the porch of the Temple. When he enters and finds Venus, he has effectively pierced deeper into the mystery of love and life and has approached a goddess very like the goddess of Nature, herself. The personification of Concord and the brothers Love and Hate, Peace and Friendship, represents the powers of Venus just as the three Graces may be "unfolded" from this goddess.¹² Thus, Scudamour first sees the effects of Venus' power and then finds them all combined in the one transcendent vision of Venus herself. Spenser was, we recall, sensitive to this precise kind of unfolding and infolding of mysteries. Agape's three sons represent and unfolding; but since Scudamour's journey takes him first to Concord and then

12. See Wind, Pagan Mysteries, Chapt. 2, pp. 26-35, for a detailed and valuable discussion of the Graces as unfolded powers of Venus. Also, Chapt. 7, pp. 113-127.

Venus, this progression is an infolding of powers. Finally, the association of Venus and Concord can be proven by recourse to the Hymne to Love which recounts the unfolding of Love and Concord from Venus. Concord's power at Venus' gate is precisely that of Love in the Hymne:-

By her the heaven is in his course contained,
 And all the world in state vnmoued stands,
 As their Almighty maker first ordained,
 And bound them with iruiolable bands;
 Else would the waters ouerflow the lards,
 And fire deuoure the ayre, and hell them quight,
 But that she holds them with her blessed hands,
 She is the nurse of pleasure and delight,
 And vnto Venus grace the gate doth open right. (4.10.35.)

And, in the Hymne:-

Then through the world his way he gan to take,
 The world that was not till he did it make;
 Whose sundrie parts he from them selues did seuer,
 The which before had lyen confused euer.

. . .
 He then them tooke, and tempering goodly well
 Their contrary dislikes with loued meanes,
 Did place them all in order, and compell
 To keepe them selues within their sundrie raines . . .
 (HL 11. 74-7; 86-88.)

In this episode Concord serves Venus, and Venus serves Nature. Scudamour, the lover, is accepted by Concord and Venus because he, too, suits Nature's purpose. The admittance of the lover, between the forces of Love and Concord, is not difficult to understand as long as we recall Love's concordant power, in the Hymne to Love. But the Hymne also helps us to understand why the brothers Love and Hate are distinguished both by age and power. The figures of Concord and these brothers are a symbolic representation of the creation of the world from the hideous Chaos; a creation which began with Venus, and which continues ceaselessly. Hate is associated with Chaos because Chaos itself is hateful. And since Chaos predated the birth of love, Hate must be the elder brother. Love, then, is the younger but stronger

since his birth brought an end to the reign of Chaos. Chaos could not resist "heavens life-giving fyre" (HL 1. 65). And, as we have seen, the precarious balance which love wrought took the form of a strained concordant harmony which is well expressed by the picture of Concord holding the brothers Love and Hate together in a strained friendship. Most important of all is the fact that each generation recreates the harmony of the former one. Each individual must therefore choose between the forces of Love and Chaos, and if he chooses Love he supports the existing order. When Scudamour passes between Love and Concord it is natural for Chaos to threaten him since the nature of Chaos is to withhold material resources and to frustrate any potential which they may have.¹³ Scudamour, the lover, enters Venus' gate in order to generate a material progeny and naturally Chaos, and Hate, would restrain him:-

On either side of her, two young men stood,
Both strongly arm'd, as fearing one another;
Yet were they brethren both of halfe the blood,
Begotten by two fathers of one mother,
Though of contrarie natures each to other:
The one of them hight Loue, the other Hate,
Hate was the elder, Loue the younger brother;
Yet was the younger stronger in his state
Then th'elder, and him maystred still in all debate.

By her I entiring halfe dismayed was,
But she in gentle wise me entertayned,
And twixt her selfe and Loue did let me pas;
But Hatred would my entrance haue restrayned,
And with this club me threatned to haue brayned,
Had not the Ladie with her powrefull speach
Him from his wicked will vneath refrayned;
And th'other eke his malice did empeach,
Till I was throughly past the perill of his reach.
(4.10.32 and 36.)

13. Marinell's false chastity served chaos because he hoarded the vast wealth of the sea, refusing to allow it any fruitful use.

In the Temple of Venus we observe the material side of love and we see how Concord restrains the forces of Chaos. But Concord's support is not limited to this one kind of love. Indeed, she supports all love because love, in general, defeats Chaos:-

Concord she cleeped was in common reed,
 Mother of Blessed Peace, and Friendship trew;
 They both her twins, both borne of heauenly seed,
 And she her selfe likewise diuinely grew;
 The which right well her workes diuine did shew:
 For strength, and wealth, and happinesse she lends,
 And strife, and warre, and anger does subdew:
 Of litle much, of foes she maketh frends,
 And to afflicted minds sweet rest and quiet sends.
 (4.10.34.)

Here, then, is the passage which best shows her contrast with Ate who supports Chaos. The opposite poles of this book are, therefore, Hate and Chaos supported by Ate, and Love and fruitfulness supported by Concord.

The interior of Venus' temple is reminiscent of many descriptions in Chaucer from the "Knight's Tale," Parliament of Fowls, House of Fame. As in the Parliament the interior is stuffy in contrast with the fresh gardens:-

Into the inmost Temple thus I came,
 Which fuming all with frankensence I found,
 And odours rising from the altars flame . . .
 An hundred Altars round about were set,
 All flaming with their sacrifices fire,
 That with the steme thereof the Temple swet . . .
 (4.10.37-8.)

But it does not seem to be as dark, closed in, and forbidding as the temple from the Parliament of Fowls. And furthermore, the Venus of Spenser's Temple stands majestically like Fame in the House of Fame, rather than reclining lasciviously like the Parliament's Venus. At last Scudamour has arrived at the center of the mystery. Spenser's rendition of Lucretius' hymn to Alma Venus demonstrates just how close

this Venus is to the goddess Nature:-

Great Venus, Queene of beautie and of grace,
 The ioy of Gods and men, that vnder skie
 Doest fayrest shine, and most adorne thy place,
 That with they smyling looke doest pacifie
 The raging seas, and makst the stormes to flie;
 Thee goddesse, thee the winds, the clouds doe feare,
 And when thou spredst they mantle forth on hie,
 The waters play and pleasant lands appeare,
 And heauens laugh, and al the world shews ioyous cheare.

Then doth the daedale earth throw forth to thee
 Out of her fruitful lap abundant flowres,
 And then all liuing wights, soone as they see
 The spring breake forth out of his lusty bowres,
 They all doe learne to play the Paramours;
 First doe the merry birds, thy lustfull powres,
 Chirpe loud to thee out of their leauy cages,
 And thee their mother call to coole their kindly rages.

Then doe the saluage beasts begin to play
 Their pleasant friskes, and loath their wonted food;
 The Lyons rore, the Tygres loudly bray,
 The raging Bulls rebellow through the wood,
 And breaking forth, dare tempt the deepest flood,
 To come where thou doest drae them with desire:
 So all things else, that nourish vitall blood,
 Soone as with fury thou doest them inspire,
 In generation seeke to quench their inward fire.

So all the world by thee at first was made,
 And dayly yet thou doest the same repayre:
 Ne ought on earth that merry is and glad,
 Ne ought on earth that louely is and fayre,
 But thou the same for pleasure didst prepayre.
 Thou art the root of all that ioyous is,
 Great God of men and women, queene of th'ayre,
 Mother of laughter, and welspring of blisse,
 O graunt that of my loue at last I amy not misse.
 (4.10.44-7.)

These lines also demonstrate the fact that Spenser's unfolding of the world from Venus, in the Hymne to Love, was not an insignificant part of his philisophy.

Aside from these lines the iconography of the statue proves Venus' association with the restorative functions of nature: indeed these prove to be her very foundation:-

Right in the midst the Goddess selfe did stand
 Vpon an altar of some costly masse,
 Whose substance was vneath to understand:
 For neither pretious stone, nor durefull brasse,
 Nor shining gold, nor mouldering clay it was;
 But much more rare and pretious to esteeme,
 Pure in aspect, and like to christall glasse,
 Yet glasse was not if one did rightly deeme,
 But being faire and bricke, likest glasse did seeme.

But it in shape and beautie did excell
 All other Idoles, which the heathen adore,
 Farre passing that, which by surpassing skill
Phidias did make in Paphos Isle of yore,
 With which that wretched Greeke, that life forlore,
 Did fall in loue: yet this much fairer shined,
 But couered with a slender veile afore;
 And both her feete and legs together twyned
 Were with a snake, whose head and tail were fast combyned.
 (4.10.39-40.)

The glass-like substance symbolizes the insubstantial nature (psychologically) of love. The snake whose head and tail are combined is a common symbol of eternity, and to this extent Venus is founded upon some kind of eternal power. And as Macrobius says in Saturnalia, the snake at the feet of a god or goddess may generally be interpreted as a symbol of the recuperative powers of nature, by virtue of the fact that a snake can shed its old skin and thus restore its former vigor.¹⁴ Finally, we learn of the fact that Venus is double sexed:-

The cause why she was couered with a vele,
 Was hard to know, for that her Priests the same,
 From peoples knowledge labour'd to conceale.
 But sooth it was not sure for womanish shame,
 Nor any blemish, which the worke mote blame;
 But for, they say, she hath both kinds in one,
 Both male and female, both vnder one name:
 She syre and mother is her selfe alone,
 Begets and eke conceiues, ne needeth other none.
 (4.10.41.)

14. Macrobius, Saturnalia, trans. Davies, I.20.1-3, p.137.

The combination of opposites in one, especially of the opposites of masculine and feminine, is appropriate in a goddess whose force is at the disposal of nature. She is associated with nature's plan to such a pure extent that Cupid has no place in her Temple. And on the other hand, she is not like the Garden's Venus who is concerned only with reconciling pleasure with the natural order. There is a vast difference between the attempt to reconcile pleasure with nature, and the attempt to enforce nature's laws before any other consideration including that of pleasure. The vision of the Hermaphrodite Venus, whose power rules the world, is a great lesson in the fourth book of the Faerie Queene where masculine and feminine polarities work toward a virtuous resolution.

This episode, describing Venus and Concord, looks ahead - as the whole of the poem does - to the Mutabilitie Cantos. Most important of all is the essential similarity between the characters Venus and Nature, Concord and Sergeant Order, as Charles G. Smith has noticed.¹⁵ Just as Ate and Duessa threaten Concord in book four, so Mutability and Bellona threaten Nature's order in the later cantos. This parallel reveals the kinship between Venus and Nature which I have endeavored to prove exists in the Temple episode of the fourth book. And Smith observed that:-

These personified abstractions alone show that Spenser's conception of Nature is essentially identical with his conception of Venus.¹⁶

The tenth canto marks the last "masculine" canto of book four, and indeed, the book might well have ended with the vision of the

15. Charles G. Smith, "Spenser's Theory of Friendship," cited in Variorum Spenser, IV, p. 310.

16. Charles G. Smith, Variorum Spenser, IV, p. 310.

Hermaphrodite Venus. She is a symbol of all of the exchanges in love by being, literally, a combination of male and female. Although her significance is largely determined against nature's laws, and therefore material generation, she still embraces higher loves. We should not let Scudamour's blindness make us forget the friends who live in the gardens. Although we hear the hymne of the lover saying:-

So all things . . .
In generation seeke to quench their inward fire.
(4.10.46.)

we should not forget that:-

. . . man, that breathes a more immortall mynd,
Not for lusts sake, but for eternitie,
Seekes to enlarge his lasting progenie. (HL 103-5.)

Venus' power is also a divine power, and in man it serves a higher purpose than in beasts.

CONCLUSION: PART ONE

The fourth book concludes with the vast sea-wedding which embraces the reconciliation of Florimell and Marinell. Although we have examined the Florimell-Marinnell story it would be of benefit to look closely at the Thames-Medway episode itself. There are several ways in which one might approach this complex episode. One might see it as very much part of a specific genre, as Roche does when he discusses river-poetry.¹ Or, one could begin to appreciate the episode by examining the intensely complex numerological structure which Professor Fowler discovered in Spenser and the Numbers of Time.² I would like to approach the episode by discussing the major images of land and sea which are so powerfully involved in the marriage of rivers, and even throughout the two love books of the Faerie Queene.

I have endeavored to show how the Florimell-Marinnell story serves as a unifying principle for books three and four: but, more than any other, their story involves the potential and essential reconciliation of the opposites of land and sea. It is my belief that although the land and sea oppose one another initially, they are resolved into a vast harmony through the mediation of double mean terms. When they join into a "marriage" with one another they symbolize the completion and union of all the polarities of books three and four: masculine and feminine, light and dark, form and matter, even books three and four themselves are symbolized by the eventual union of land and sea. Therefore, since book three represents

1. Thomas P. Roche, Jr., *The Kindly Flame*, pp. 167-184.

2. Fowler, Numbers, pp. 182-191.

the book of the masculine nature, their union (symbolized and sanctified in the Thames-Medway celebration) literally completes the two love books in the same way that the original ending of book three completed the story of Amoret and Scudamour.

The images of land and sea are constantly modulating toward one another through an exchange of roles facilitated by the establishment of "double mean terms." Therefore, when the land and sea are first compared in book three, they appear unfriendly to one another; yet, by the time one has reached the concluding cantos of book four, there remains hardly any distinction between them. When Florimell and Marinell are about to reach a reconciliation, the marriage of the Thames and Medway acts as a symbol of the accord of land and sea, with Thames and Medway suggesting the actual "means" necessary to such a marriage. In brief, when the land and sea are first compared the land is fertile and beautiful; the sea, strong and sterile.³ When the Thames and Medway are married, the sea is both extremely fertile and immensely strong.⁴ Feminine has blended into masculine, the land into the sea: Venus has been "reborn" on the foamy waves. One may assume that various other polarities have also found accord through this marriage: thus helping to establish the cosmic and universal implications of love.

3. Florimell and Marinell are, of course, associated with land and sea simply by their names. Further, Florimell's fresh beauty, which is involved in the spring season, cannot help but contrast with Marinell's sterile, indifferent strength. The contrast between these lovers is, therefore, a veiled contrast of land and sea.

4. See (4.12.1-2.).

We shall begin our examination of the land and sea by considering the episode depicting Marinell's ritual death at the hands of Britomart. The episode begins with Britomart's complaint against the sea, continues with an account of Marinell's death, and concludes in a different "key" through the description of Arthur's loss of Florimell, and his complaint against the darkness of death. Though the shift away from Marinell to Arthur does indeed conclude Marinell's story for a while, it is nonetheless aesthetically in tune with what has gone before: with Marinell's death scene and Britomart's complaint. Indeed, Britomart's accusation of the sea as an element of indifference and sorrow parallels Arthur's own accusation of night as the symbol of death, for just as night has bereft him of the sight of Florimell, the sea will, in time, rob the entire world of her. Britomart's complaint against the sea is motivated by her love for the indifferent Artegall and it is therefore the sea's cruel indifference which bothers her. But, it is important to note that she reveals the masculine cruelty of the sea at this time:-

Huge sea of sorrow, and tempestuous griefe,
Wherein my feeble barke is tossed long,
Far from the hoped hauen of reliefe,
Why do thy cruell billowes beat so strong,
And thy moyst mountaines each on others throng
Threatning to swallow vp my fearefull life?
O do thy cruell wrath and spightfull wrong
At length allay, and stint thy stormy strife,
Which in these troubled bowles raignes, and rageth rife.

For else my feeble vessell crazd, and crackt
Through thy strong buffets and outrageous blowes,
Cannot endure, but needs it must be wrackt
On the rough rocks, or on the sandy shallowes,
The whiles that loue it steres, and fortune rowes;
Loue my lewd Pilot hath a restlesse mind
And Fortune Boteswaine no assuraunce knowes,
But saile withouten starres gainst tide and wind:
How can they othe do, sith both are bold and blind?

Thou God of winds, that raignest in the seas,
 That raignest also in the Continent,
 At last blow vp some gentle gale of ease,
 The which may bring my ship, ere it be rent,
 Vnto gladsome port of her intent:
 Then when I shall my selfe in safety see,
 A table for eternall monument
 Of thy great grace, and my great ieopardie,
 Great Neptune, I auow to hallow vnto thee,

(3.4.8-10.)

As she complains against "Great Neptune" who is responsible for the cruel indifference of the sea, the sea itself sends her a challenge in the person of the knight who refuses to love. Her reaction indicates that she recognizes this "masculine" challenge of indifference, for upon seeing the knight her "former sorrow" is converted into "suddein wrath." (3.4.12.) The challenge and subsequent degradation of Marinell is, therefore, of some reflection on the sea. Britomart's ease in defeating the knight suggests that in spite of the great might of both Marinell and the sea, which he represents, both contain a fatal weakness. In fact, the strengths of both Marinell and the ocean are directed away from divine purpose so long as they reflect an inability to love. Marinell must succumb to love and the ocean in so doing will release its treasures to the land. The treasure on the Rich Strond is not an example of the ocean's fecundity. Clearly, these riches are not generated by the ocean, and therefore, they may not be held up as proof of the ocean's fertility. Furthermore, since they remain imprisoned on the Rich Strond, and guarded by the sea's knight, they benefit no one; they are more a symbol of the sea's present sterility arising from its refusal to unite with the land. It is no wonder that Britomart scorns such treasure, for it represents nothing more than the sea's - and Artegall's - waste of resources. Surely, there is the clear

association of the treasure with death; for it is through the death of "many wretches" that the sea has been able to devour these riches:-

The God did graunt his daughters deare demaund,
 To doen his Nephew in all riches flow;
 Eftsoones his heaped waues he did commaund,
 Out of their hollow bosome forth to throw
 All the huge threasure, which the sea below
 Had in his greedie gulfe deuoured deepe,
 And him enriched through the ouerthrow
 And wreckes of may wretches, which did weepe,
 And often waile their wealth, which he from them did keepe.

(3.4.22., my italics.)

It is a vicious ocean which steals from the land without offering something in return. No wonder that the sea is symbolic of death and darkness as long as it acts accordingly. Although one can accept Fowler's assertion that the sea will become fertile by gradually passing into Venus' influence,⁵ it is certain that at present it belongs to Neptune and Proteus who inflict a wintry sterility upon it.

Arthur's complaint against the darkness of night follows swiftly after the episode which has implied the characteristics of indifference and sterility for the ocean; his remarks are related to those preceding by the image which begins his complaint:-

Tho when her wayes (Florimell's) he could no more desory,
 But to and fro at disauenture strayd;
 Like as a ship, whose Lodestarre suddenly
 Couered with cloudes, her Pilot hath dismayd;
 His wearisome pursuit perforce he stayd . . .

(3.4.53.)

Both Britomart and Arthur are at the mercy of an indifferent sea: the sea, to Britomart, represents masculine indifference, and to Arthur, the death which threatens seasonal beauty. Thus, the darkness

5. Fowler, Numbers, pp. 146-147.

separating Arthur from Florimell is symbolic of death, and when we recall that Marinell has just died and has been taken into the sea, and that Florimell will, in turn, "die" in Proteus' wintery embrace, and be taken into a seven month darkness in the bowels of the sea, it is fairly clear that the sea presently represents the darkness and sterility of death. It is the archetype to which Arthur's image of night ultimately refers.

The next stage in the development of the relationship between land and sea occurs when Florimell exchanges the land for the "safety" she now finds in the previously menacing ocean. At this time we may clearly perceive that there has been some basic alteration in the natures of land and sea, and this is the result of the invention of "means" appropriate almost to a love relationship. Clearly, the sea has begun to mollify both its strength and its indifference, for it has become safer and calmer than the "greedy" land. Britomart's prayer to the God of winds has been heard and answered:-

For being fled into the fishers bote,
For refuge from the Monsters crueltie,
Long so she on the mightie maine did flote,
And with the tide droue forward careleslie;
For th'aire was milde, and cleared was the skie,
And all his windes Dan Aeolus did keepe,
From stirring vp their stormy enmitie . . .

(3.8.21.)

Wintery Proteus receives the land's fragile beauty; the sea enfolds the feminine frailty of the land. But as yet, the exchange of roles is incomplete and the sea remains harsh and cruel until the seeds of "frailty," sown at the time of Florimell's imprisonment, ripen. We notice that Proteus has been affected by a concern for Florimell's plight, indicating that the sea is no longer indifferent.

He therein saw that yrkesome sight, which smote
 Deepe indignation and compassion frayle
 Into his hart attonce . . .

(3.8.31.)

Seeing the land's final attempt to desecrate the frail beauty of Florimell, Proteus, and the sea, are roused from stony indifference to a "fraile" compassionate commitment. The land and the sea have begun to invent the means necessary to their own marriage. The land, now coming under the spell of winter, has begun to acquire a sterile strength which menaces Florimell; the sea meets the land's new strength with a mollification of its previously indifferent strength and the introduction of a "compassion frayle." It would seem that the land and sea are exchanging roles, although the essentially extreme natures of land and sea remain the same: the "extremes" are inventing "means."

The final cantos of book four take up the story of Florimell at the end of the seven month captivity which began in canto eight of book three. (That the eighth canto should mark this point in Florimell's course is not inappropriate since the number eight is symbolic in Christian numerologies, of rebirth.⁶ And although Florimell "dies" at this point, yet like Marinell, her death is the first step necessary to her rebirth.) By the time Florimell's imprisonment is nearly ended one notices quite a transformation in the sea, for this sea of fecundity and purpose is definitely far

6. Emile Male, Religious Art in France: XIII Century. A Study in in Mediaeval Iconography and its Sources of Inspiration, trans. Dora Nussey, 3rd. ed. (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1913). I have used the Fontana Library reprint of the 3rd. ed. entitled: The Gothio Image (London, 1961), p. 14.

removed from Britomart's "Huge sea of sorrow." At this point the land of book III, or the feminine nature, has been absorbed into the masculine context of the sea so that Venus' fecundity is finally resolved within the context of masculine purpose.

The most persuasive example of this is in the marriage of the Thames and Medway, for Medway's fecundity has been absorbed within the context of the wedding ceremony, which is a masculine context, expressing the sacrament of love in marriage. Like Epithalamion, this episode describes the marriage ceremony as a symbol of the divine purpose enfolding the fecundity of marriage. The marriage ceremony of the Thames and Medway episode is a triumph of complex numerological symbolism.⁷ Why should Spenser's numerical tours de force be consistently involved with marriage ceremonies?⁸ Perhaps it is because the ceremony of marriage represents such a vastly important context in the affairs of human nature. Indeed, it solemnizes the reintegration of feminine with masculine; seasonal fertility with the soul's eternal life. The reason for the complexity of numerology involved in the wedding ceremony, therefore, is to suggest the divine purpose of the ceremony itself. It is made intensely intricate in order that it be monumentally purposeful. And such a context is appropriately masculine in nature.⁹ The ceremony embraces the wedded couple just

7. Fowler, Numbers, pp. 182-191.

8. Kent Hieatt first noticed the complex numerological structure of the Epithalamion. See his study: Short Time's Endless Monument: The Symbolism of the Numbers in Edmund Spenser's 'Epithalamion' (New York, 1960).

9. I.e., since masculinity is consistently associated with spiritual purpose and intellect in the Faerie Queene.

as the groom embraces the bride, or the sea embraces the land. And once the land's fecundity is so embraced, it outstrips its previously isolated fecundity, even as these stanzas suggest:

O what an endlesse worke haue I in hand,
 To count the seas abundant progeny,
 Whose fruitfull seede farre passeth those in land . . .
 So fertile be the flouds in generation,
 So huge their numbers, and so numberlesse their nation.

Therefore the antique wisards well inuented,
 That Venus of the fomy sea was bred;

(my italics)

(4.12.1-2.)

But further, it is the rivers themselves which offer the means of this vast union, this cosmic marriage. Because the rivers are of the same element as the sea, and yet symbolic at the same time of continents, countries, and counties, they are perfectly suited as means between sea and land. Because they represent a reconcilable polarity around which the extremes of sea and land may gather, they are exactly the kind of means suitable to this greater union.

The marriage of the Thames and Medway is also a marriage of the vast, inclusive opposites of land and sea. And the union of these great opposites is effected through the mediation of double mean terms. The tetradic harmony of this union is symbolic of the most stable kind of marriage of extremes in the universe. But Spenser uses it as the most powerful bond for lovers, as well. We watch the operation of the means in the Thames-Medway celebration and we understand that, as a result, the land and sea are also married. When Thames and Medway are accorded, and exchange vows, the greater union is implied.

In the same way lovers will exchange means toward their accord. When Artegall and Britomart become reconciled Artegall receives a

feminine softness by learning to love, while Britomart receives masculine strength. The lovers exchange means and therefore bring themselves into accord. Thus it is that the word "mean" is used pointedly in this sense when lovers are engaged in reconciliations of this kind. The final cantos of the fourth book symbolize the proper kind of union among lovers: and, as one can expect from Spenser, the process of union is borrowed from the examples of great creating nature. With the union of extremes implied in the Thames-Medway marriage, the fourth book concludes the love debate. The essential lesson to be derived from the marriage of opposites is that Spenser believes solidly in the claims of both sides of this dualistic life. If he trusts in a time when no more time shall be, or when darkness yields to light, or when matter dissolves into divine form, he nevertheless supports this world, and this life, by finding ways of making virtue of necessity. The concluding cantos of the love debate are indisputable evidence of Spenser's love of this world as well as the next: it is never right to believe that Spenser wished to turn his back on the flesh and simply transcend it. The poet of the Faerie Queene accepted the duality of this world as a condition of necessity, and simply trusted that all dualities would merge and become one in Christ.

CONCLUSION: PART TWO

And ye high heauens, the temple of the gods,
 In which a thousand torches flaming bright
 Doe burne, that to vs wretched earthly clods,
 In dreadful darknesse lend desired light;
 And all ye powers which in the same remayne,
 More then we men can fayne,
 Poure out your blessing on vs plentifully,
 And happy influence vpon vs raine,
 That we may raise a large posterity,
 Which from the earth, which they may long possesse,
 With lasting happinesse,
 Vp to your haughty pallaces may mount,
 And for the guerdon of theyr glorious merit
 May heavenly tabernacles there inherit,
 Of blessed Saints for to increase the count.
 So let vs rest, sweet loue, in hope of this,
 And cease till then our tymely ioyes to sing,
 The woods no more vs answer, nor our eccho ring.

(Epithalamion ll. 409-426.)

If Spenser's love philosophy leads him to desire a spiritual transcendence it is certainly not because he finds this world distasteful. Earthly love leads him to contemplate spiritual love, in the Epithalamion, but in doing so he indicates no desire to hasten along so as to discover that other world:-

So let vs rest, sweet loue, in hope of this,
 And cease till then our tymely ioyes to sing,

Some critics have misunderstood Spenser's love philosophy because of their decision to accept that the Fowre Hymnes constitute the most accurate statement of that philosophy, and that these hymnes indicate the poet's desire to consummate spiritual love at the expense of earthly, or fleshly love. In the first place, the third and fourth books of the Faerie Queene should always be emphasized over the Hymnes, in this context; and secondly, the Hymnes can easily be misunderstood - thus giving a wholly false picture of Spenser's

love philosophy in general. The poet of the Epithalamion cannot be taken as a man for whom sex was distasteful, as some have argued.¹⁰ While it is perfectly true that the Hymnes demonstrate that love is "born" in heaven, and that it is to heaven that love returns, one cannot argue thereby that the poet can hardly wait for his death. As a Christian he recognized the hierarchy of the universe, and he trusts in the life which is to come. But as a man he delights in this world, and attempts to live life to the full because he knows that in serving Nature he serves God. Spenser believes in the world to come, but accepts joyfully the life he has been given. The careful reader is continually aware of the fact that Spenser invariably chooses to enjoy this world, and to leave the next world to faith. He never turned his back on the pleasures of the flesh.

Spenser's theory of love, then, involves two worlds and a vast number of corresponding dualities. If he believed, as a Christian, that the two worlds were arranged according to a hierarchy wherein spirit was triumphant over flesh, such beliefs did not impair his enjoyment of this fleshly world. In a sense, this is the very crux of the matter in Spenser: there is an apparent conflict between the belief in a hierarchical universe, and the ability to involve oneself in this life. In his love ethic this conflict is noticeable in the relationships between man and woman. According to faith in the hierarchy, man is superior to woman just as intellect is superior to appetite. Following this distinction, Spenser constructs a feminine and masculine harmony predicated on the fact that woman must be drawn into man, as Eve into Adam. There is absolutely no question

10. Critics of modern literature are prone to attack Spenser in this way.

that Spenser is arguing the superiority of man on a hierarchical scale.

But, although the philosophy of the reformation of dissevered human nature must serve the higher purpose of the hierarchy, yet in the particular examples of love relationships the poet rejects masculine supremacy. He makes "virtue of necessity," as Chaucer had done before him, by insisting that neither partner should have mastery in love. A husband should renounce mastery by submitting himself to his lady as her slave in love (even though he may be the lord in marriage - that is, the masterful partner in the eyes of the world). The example of Britomart and Artegall serves us here. Artegall humbles himself to Britomart by renouncing mastery. His gentillesse is such that Britomart is capable of following his example, and she also rejects mastery. Thus, both partners willingly become equals in love despite the faith in a hierarchy.

But this does not mean that Artegall should renounce his position in the hierarchy in general. In a sense, chaste marriage represents the only exception to the rule - it presents a situation where it is more virtuous to heed the demands of the flesh than to blindly support the demands of the faith. If, for example, man insists on supremacy in love, the marriage - which is good in the sight of God - may fail and crumble. Better, then, to make virtue of necessity. But clearly, outside of marriage, and in the eyes of the world, the man should retain his superiority. When Artegall fails to understand this lesson he falls into the hands of Radigund and suffers not only severe indignity, but supports a most dangerous threat to the order and justice of the world. The dangers represented by Radigund are, without doubt, of great magnitude. When Britomart arrives to save Artegall, she repeals the "liberty of women" and thus restores

"true justice."

So there a while they afterwards remained,
 Him to refresh, and her late wounds to heale:
 During which space she there as Princess rained,
 And changing all that forme of common weale,
 The liberty of women did repeale,
 Which they had long vsurpt; and them restoring
 To mens subiection, did true Iustice deale:
 That all they as a Goddesse her adoring,
 Her wisdom did admire, and hearkned to her loring.

(5.7.42.)

Equality in love, but masculine supremacy in the eyes of the world; this is the lesson which Spenser has taken from Chaucer and which he continually supports. Perhaps it is easy to become sceptical, as modern critics do, and argue that Spenser really didn't mean what he said. Leslie Fiedler contents himself with this:-

The lover may kneel still before his mistress, but he kneels not to pledge himself to humility and secrecy, but to ask her hand, that is, to become not her servant but her master.

(p. 57.)

Fiedler does seem to have misunderstood Spenser who wrote of love with no such motives. I trust, at least, that my discussion of books three and four of the Faerie Queene proves sufficiently that Spenser's motives were honest and that his belief in an existence beyond this life led him not away from the flesh, but indisputably toward a total and equitable involvement in the flesh. Fiedler is correct in assuming that Spenser's motives lead him away from the adultery of courtly love, and that he believed love could flourish in marriage; but Fiedler is wrong to doubt Spenser's motives on the equitable relationship between man and wife.

Fiedler is in good company, though. In Professor J.B. Broadbent's study of Poetic Love ¹¹ Spenser appears to be the villain of the piece for reasons not unrelated to Fiedler's remarks. Broadbent seems to take a rare delight in misunderstanding Spenser, and

11, J.B. Broadbent, Poetic Love (London: Chatto & Windus, 1964).

attributing all of the most loathed examples of bathetic poetry to his influence.

It seems plausible enough to attempt to evaluate Spenser's influence on later poets and, therefore, we must examine Broadbent's assertions that Spenser's influence on the poetry of love is invariably bad. In the first place, Broadbent emphasizes the Hymnes, which he has partly misinterpreted; and secondly, he rejects the Faerie Queene out of hand, for he believes it to be:-

a very Italianate, late Renaissance, mannered work,
and a dead end, rather than . . . Shakespeare's comedies
and sonnets . . . 12

This approach to the subject of poetic love in Spenser seems ill founded, for Broadbent dismisses the Faerie Queene in order that he may emphasize what he considers to be the very penultimate worst in Spenser. He uses the Hymnes because they seem to support his prejudice; but when he is forced to consider the love ethic of the Faerie Queene he is disinterested.¹³

I do not argue with Broadbent's assessment of Spenser's influence on minor poets. Doubtless, he is right in pointing out the excesses which were perpetrated - all in the name of Spenser. And in this light, his emphasis of the Hymnes is not misplaced either. Later imitators of Spenser might have attempted to continue the kind of "baroque" poetry which ascends impotently to the heavens amid a cloud of archaic words drawn from Spenser's pattern in the Hymnes. We can illustrate this point by citing directly from Broadbent's study:-

12. Poetic Love, p. 41.

13. Poetic Love, pp. 159-173.

A general reason why Spenser's Heavenly Hymns are perverse is that Poems of religious love must contradict themselves. When mysticism, Platonic or Christian, is put into words, it must end in rhetoric for Only by the form, the pattern,/ Can words or music reach/ The stillness . . . (Burnt Norton). Words are ineluctably terrestrial and nominalist. Even poetry written before Hobbes can only connote, not denote the ideal, the universal and divine, "Th' Idea of his pure glory": O blessed well of love, O flower of grace,/ O glorious morning star, O lamp of light,/ Most lively image of thy Father's face,/ Eternal King of glory, Lord of might,/ Meek Lamb of God before all worlds behight . . . (Heavenly love, 169). That kind of nonsense derives from the macaronic verse of the 14th and 15th centuries, when there were not yet enough English words for the concepts of theology. ¹⁴

Broadbent continues to show how this kind of "nonsense" is reflected in the "hymn-writers and by the 'Spenserians' of the 17th Century." Insofar as he is arguing that a disembodied mysticism proves an impotent poetic, and that this kind of influence may be traced back to certain examples in Spenser - primarily the Hymnes - I must agree that he is correct in his assessment. However, he protests too much:-

Their work (the baroque imitators) confirms the tendency of Spenser to baroque, and the failure of all to truly renounce the flesh. ¹⁵

Can we judge a man by his inferiors? Even the best and most ingenious imitators cannot be said to know more, or express more clearly the doctrines of the master, without solid proof. Broadbent has just argued that because Fletcher and Crashaw are baroque in the worst sense, then Spenser - not the limited Spenser of the Hymnes, but the greater Spenser - must have been baroque too. The sins of the sons are being heaped unjustifiably upon the father. And, as I continually argue, Broadbent has only the Hymnes to back him up.

But what is worse, and what really raises objections, is the

14. Poetic Love, p. 90.

15. Poetic Love, p. 93.

wholly false assumption that Spenser wanted to renounce the flesh. Broadbent's emphasis of the Hymnes is disproportionate at times, but when he misinterprets them as well, he compounds the error. I do not know what Giles Fletcher or Crashaw thought about the philosophy of love, but I do know that Spenser never attempted to renounce the flesh in preference for a wholly spiritual transcendence. If later poets imitate a part of Spenser's philosophy and his poetic, while themselves rejecting or misunderstanding Spenser's reticence to denounce the flesh, then the sin is upon their heads, not Spenser's. Thus, I agree that Spenser may have left an unfortunate legacy behind him, through the dullness of his "sons," and the character of the ages in which they lived (ages of science and scepticism), but since Spenser never held the beliefs of his followers one can impute no blame to him.

The third and fourth books of the Faerie Queene do not support Broadbent's assertion that "Spenser uses the ladder (of love) not to make love philosophic, but to purge it of sensuality."¹⁶ We know that the poet of the Epithalamion was no way inclined to forsake fleshly love, or to eschew its pleasures. Either Spenser's Hymnes contradict his other works, or else Broadbent has misread them, and I suggest that the latter is more probable. Robert Ellrodt, one of the best commentators on Spenser, has said in summary of his discussion of the Hymnes:-

. . . when he speaks of love, Spenser with the Platonists starts from heaven, whence all love proceeds. But instead of returning love to heaven, to intellectual Beauty, he dwells on Beauty incarnate. What he loves is Beauty in the self rather than Beauty's self.¹⁷

16. Poetic Love, p. 84.

17. Ellrodt, Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser, p. 37.

This is because Spenser's

. . . ethical bent and his frank acceptance of physical love within the bounds of honesty [runs] contrary to it [i.e., to "the Renaissance ideal of Platonic love between men and women"]. 18

Broadbent's attitude is characteristic of modern opinions on Spenser. It is fashionable to attempt to debunk everything Victorian, and unfortunately, scholars like Broadbent and Fiedler have found a rather agreeable scapegoat in Spenser. It is all too easy to argue that this poet's vision of chaste married love marks the place where "it all began," and where everyone began to get "up-tight" about sex. Indeed, Broadbent betrays his prejudice - which makes for his predilection for enforcing the moral standards of his own time upon Spenser's age, where they do not always apply - when he actually calls Spenser a "Victorian."

Spenser was a Victorian: his men can't be virile, so their brides are coy. 19

Presumably, this is the ultimate insult. But it simply is not true.

In a way, I have brought this discussion forward in order to demonstrate that Spenser has always been misunderstood, to a certain extent, and that sometimes these misunderstandings have made him fashionable, and sometimes not. Broadbent is right in claiming that his influence was not always for the best, and that a good deal of bad poetry may be laid at his door. This is true for the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries when Spenser's mysticism was imitated, and when, perhaps, his ethic of love was devalued by sentimentality. In

18. Ellrodt, Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser, p. 35.

19. Poetic Love, p. 169.

this era his influence, was, perhaps, not the best. But when the Romantics burst upon the scene, their misunderstandings of Spenser proved to be of some value for literature - and Spenser's stock went up. Subsequently, Spenser was much loved and seldom read. And today there does seem to be a controversy - although Kermode believes Spenser to have been "dislodged with no fuss at all".²⁰ Some argue that he is too Victorian to be likeable, others argue that he was really an Elizabethan computer code-named E. Spenser (as any first reading of Spenser and the Numbers of Time, by Alastair Fowler, would almost indicate). What the fortunes of Spenser will be in future is hard to say, but the increased awareness of his importance, his genius, and his vision is surely beneficial in the long run.

It would be interesting to trace the influence of Spenser up to modern times, but such a task must lie outside the confines of this paper. Instead, one might endeavor to search for any possible appreciation of Spenser which Shakespeare and Milton may have had. If Spenser was of some value to these poets, then one may assume that he has left an important, and obviously worthwhile legacy behind him.

Shakespeare's esteem for Spenser is recorded in the Passionate Pilgrim:-

If Musicke and sweet Poetrie agree,
As they must needs (the Sister and the brother)
Then must the loue be great twixt thee and me,
Because thou lou'st the one, and I the other.
Dowland to thee is deere, whose heauenly tuch
Vpon the Lute, dooth rauish humane sense:

20. Frank Kermode, Spenser, Shakespeare and Donne: Renaissance Essays (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971), p. 12.

Spenser to me, whose deepe Conceit is such,
 As passing all conceit, needs no defence.
 Thou lou'st the heare the sweet melodious sound,
 That Phoebus Lute (the Queene of Musicke) makes:
 And I in deepe Delight am chiefly drownd,
 When as himselfe to singing he betakes.
 One God is God of both (as Poets faine)
 One Knight loues Both, and both in thee remaine.²¹

On this basis alone one might be willing to accept Renwick's assertion that:-

. . . Shakespeare himself might not have achieved so much if Spenser had not lived and laboured . . .²²

But we have the additional evidence of Shakespeare's two Spenserian poems, Venus and Adonis, and the Rape of Lucrece. Renwick cites these poems as examples of the fact that Shakespeare "could not compete with Spenser on Spenser's own lines."²³ But, of course, the very fact that he did compete makes a point which cannot be ignored: the point that he truly admired Spenser's poetry.

We must also remember that Spenser was an experimenter with verse, language, and style as well as philosophy. From this point of view, Spenser was Shakespeare's teacher, and it is arguable that the fluency of Shakespearian verse owes much to Spenser.

Since we have already compared Venus and Adonis with the Faerie Queene (3.1.34-8.), there is no need to cite passages by way of comparisons between these poems. Yet, some citation of comparable passages would be of value in demonstrating, explicitly, the Spenserian influence in Shakespeare. Since Venus and Adonis has already been employed in such a service, one might turn to the later poem,

21. "The Passionate Pilgrim", VIII, Variorum Shakespeare, ed. Rollins, ll. 103-116, p. 282.

22. Renwick, Edmund Spenser, p. 179.

23. Edmund Spenser, p. 180.

the Rape of Lucrece.

The situation of the poem recalls, yet again, the first canto of book three in the Faerie Queene. Tarquin's rape of Lucrece parallels Malecasta's attempted "rape" of Britomart in Castle Joyous. The false Tarquin disguises himself as a friend (i.e., he disguises his true intent by feigning civility); but his lascivious glances should be enough to give him away were it not that Lucrece is too chaste to know their import. Further, Tarquin's lust eventually brings him to the point of stealing into Lucrece's bedroom like a thief. And finally, Lucrece is described with precisely the same kind of imagery which Spenser used to characterize Britomart in the Castle of Delight. The situation is similar in both poems, but in addition, there are many passages in Shakespeare's poem which betray the Spenserian influence in his verse:-

For that he colourd with his high estate,
Hiding base sin in pleats of Maiestie:
That nothing in him seemd inordinate,
Sawe sometime too much wonder of his eye,
Which hauing all, all could not satisfie;
But poorly rich so wanteth in his store,
That cloy'd with much, he pineth still for more.

But she that neuer cop't with straunger eies,
Could picke no meaning from their parling lookes,
Nor read the subtle shining secrecies,
Writ in the glassie margents of such bookes,
Shee toucht no vnknown baits, nor feard no hooks,
Nor could shee moralize his wanton sight,
More then his eies were opend to the light.²⁴

And now Malecasta:-

She seemd a woman of great bountihed,
And of rare beautie, sauing that askaunce
Her wanton eyes, ill signes of womanhed,
Did roll too lightly, and too often glaunce,
Without regard of grace, or comely amenaunce.

24. "The Rape of Lucrece," Variorum Shakespeare, ed. Rollins, 11. 92-105, pp. 129-130.

. . . .

Still did she roue at her with crafty glaunce
Of her false eyes, that at her hart did ayme,
And told her meaning in her countenance;
But Britomart dissembled it with ignoraunce.

(3.1.41,50.)

Here there is a similarity in style as well as situation. But even more imitative is the seventeenth stanza of Lucrece:-

Far from the purpose of his comming thither,
He makes excuses for his being there,
No clowdie show of stormie blustering wether,
Doth yet in his faire welkin once appeare,
Till sable Night mother of dread and feare,
Vppon the world dim darknesse doth displaie,
And in her vaultie prison, stowes the daie.²⁵

And again, there are more imitative stanzas on the subject of night:-

O comfort-killing night, image of Hell,
Dim register, and notarie of shame,
Blacke stage for tragedies, and murthers fell,
Vast sin-concealing Chaos, nourse of blame.
Blind muffled bawd, darke harbor for defame,
Grim caue of death, whispring conspirator,
With close-tong'd treason & the rauisher.

O hatefull, vaporous, and foggy night,
Since thou art guilty of my curelesse crime:
Muster thy mists to meete the Easterne light,
Make war against proportion'd course of time.
Or if thou wilt permit the Sunne to clime
His wonted height, yet ere he go to bed,
Knit poysonous clouds about his golden head.²⁶

It is hardly necessary to cite from Spenser to see the similarities. Suffice it to say that Bush²⁷ notices the debt to Spenser in these stanzas and directs the reader's attention to Arthur's raillery of night (3.4.55,58.).

25. "Lucrece," Variorum Shakespeare, ed. Rollins, ll. 113-119, p. 131.

26. "Lucrece," Variorum Shakespeare, ed. Rollins, ll. 764-777, pp. 180-181.

27. Cited in Variorum Shakespeare, n., line 767, pp. 180-181.

There are many places in the poem where one recalls Spenser: Tarquin stealing to Lucrece's bed (stanza 43); the "lunar" chastity of Lucrece (stanza 54); the conceit of water wearing away stone, but tears seemingly incapable of softening the obdurate heart (stanza 85) recalling Florimell's plight (4.12.7.) under quite different circumstances; the invocation to personified Opportunity (stanzas 126-132) recalling Spenser's descriptions of Occasion (2.4.4.), and so on. I make no attempt at a complete discussion of this subject, but I trust that the Spenserian influence on Shakespeare in this, and its companion poem Venus and Adonis, is sufficiently proven. Certainly, the overall scheme of both poems is one which would have drawn support from Spenser: the treatment of chastity in man and lust in woman (Venus and Adonis); and the opposite, with lust in man and chastity in woman (Lucrece).

Of course, Shakespeare was to be a dramatist more than a poet, and his fame rests upon his skills in this genre. Perhaps one would argue that the Spenserian influence was, in fact, a retardation of the dramatist's talents, and that it is well that Shakespeare could not compete on Spenser's own home ground. Despite some truth here, the exercise must have been of great value to Shakespeare. And, in fact, as a maker of dramas it is apparent that he still remembered the lessons he had drawn from the Faerie Queene and the Fowre Hymnes.

John Vyvyan has shown how many of the early comedies contain Platonism which developed through Plotinus and Ficino, and was available to Shakespeare through Castiglione and Spenser. Vyvyan seems to believe that one can easily trace Castiglione's seven "rungs" of the Platonic ascent in Spenser - presumably in the Hymnes:-

We have seen that Castiglione's seven stages - which can also be traced in Spenser - provide a plan for this spiritual journey (in Shakespeare).²⁸

But unfortunately, the Hymnes are rather unobliging when one attempts such an analysis. Enid Welsford's study concludes that it is difficult to find any ascent beyond the third rung, and that the upward movement which is present in the Hymnes should not be equated with any "continuous ladder."²⁹ In any case, a complete Platonic ascent in the Hymnes is not as much a matter of common knowledge as Vyvyan seems to think. Nonetheless, Vyvyan proves his point that Spenser's Neoplatonism could have been an influence to Shakespeare.

The Neoplatonic ascent involved leaving the lady behind in order to contemplate ideal beauty. But such an ascent would be inappropriate to drama, and Vyvyan argues that Shakespeare has solved the problem brilliantly:-

When we first considered Castiglione's stages, it will be remembered, we noticed that from a theatrical point of view the loss of the heroine created a problem. I think it may now be granted that Shakespeare came to grips with this problem and solved it brilliantly: by the device of putting the heroine in disguise, she was preserved for the audience, but seemingly lost to the hero for that part of the ascent which had to be made in solitude, and restored to him as a revelation, undisguised, on its completion.³⁰

Behind the solution, as Vyvyan argues in an earlier comment, is Spenser:-

But to lose the heroine altogether is dramatically impossible: and - although it is conceivable that she might make a parallel ascent in her own hermitage - is it philosophically necessary, or even right?

28. John Vyvyan, Shakespeare and Platonic Beauty (London: Chatto & Windus, 1961), p. 76.

29. Enid Welsford, Spenser: Fowre Hymnes, Epithalamion, A Study of Edmund Spenser's Doctrine of Love, p. 48.

30. Vyvyan, Shakespeare and Platonic Beauty, p. 125.

Spenser, if no one else, came to his assistance here. Spenser's lovers are companion souls, predestined "to work each others ioy and true content"; and their mutual harmony is a part of the world-harmony. If they fail to achieve this ideal relationship, something of universal value will have been lost; but if they live it - which may be far from easy - then the heavenly pattern will, to that extent, have been re-created on earth, and that is the purpose of love's incarnation.³¹

Lovers are meant to "work each others ioy." Certainly, the third and fourth books of the Faerie Queene are monuments to this sentiment. But there is even more of Spenser in Shakespeare's "solution" to the problem of retaining the heroine while depicting a lover's ascent. Spenser not only anticipates the philosophy behind "love's incarnation," but the trappings of the disguise, as well. While Vyvyan cites Rosalind's disguise as a man, in As You Like It, one should recall Britomart and her disguise as a masculine knight.

Beyond doubt, the vision of the chaste, vulnerable maiden Britomart whose surest defence is the armor of chastity which disguises her as a male, would have appealed to Shakespeare. and fourth books of the Faerie Queene Rosalind and Britomart are similar to one another through their chastity and their disguises which defend them from harm: indeed, Shakespeare seem to have returned to the theme of chastity in love which he considered in his Spenserian poems. And, it would seem that the disguises of both Rosalind and Britomart have a beneficial effect upon the masculine lovers who learn how to prepare themselves for love by having contact with the maidens whom they are destined to marry, but whose identity is unknown to them. Rosalind actually teaches Orlando, and instructs him in the heavenly ways of love. And Britomart - who loves Artegall as the image most pleasing to her

31. Vyvyan, Shakespeare and Platonic Beauty, pp. 58-59.

mind - retains her disguise until Artegall, himself, reveals her face. At this moment, Artegall is enlightened, and he knows the genuine character of his destined love. Britomart had seen Artegall in the magic mirror and instantly loved this semblance most pleasing to her mind; but Artegall required experience and understanding. He required the ascent necessary to provide him with the true vision of his love. Thus, as with Rosalind, when he achieves this vision the lady's disguise is put aside and the lovers are brought together in marriage. The maiden Britomart is, therefore, retained "on the stage," but is lost to her lover during the time when he must make the ascent necessary to understand the true nature of love. Shakespeare, it appears, remembered this lesson in Spenser.

Milton also found much to admire in Spenser:-

. . .

And if ought els, great Bards beside,
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of Turneys and of Trophies hung;
Of Forests, and inchantments drear,
Where more is meant then meets the ear.³²

His early poetry often rings with a kind of Spenserian phraseology. Indeed, the publisher's preface to the 1645 edition of Milton's early poetry indicates that the poet may have attempted to imitate Spenser:-

Let the event guide it self which way it will,
I shall deserve of the age, by bringing into Light
as true a Birth, as the Muses have brought forth since
our famous Spenser wrote; whose Poems in these English
ones are as rarely imitated, as sweetly excell'd.³³

32. John Milton, The Poetical Works, ed. Helen Darbishire (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), Vol II, "Il Penseroso," ll. 116-120, p. 145. All subsequent references to Milton will cite this edition.

33. Works of Milton, ed. Darbishire, vol II, p. 112.

"On the Morning of Christ's Nativity" is an obvious example of Milton's "imitation" of Spenser:-

That glorious Form, that Light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of Majesty,
Wherewith he wont at Heav'ns high Councel-Table,
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and here with us to be,
Forsook the Courts of everlasting Day,
And chose with us a darksome House of mortal Clay.³⁴

Milton uses the philosophical terms (Form, for example) with absolute confidence, and his association of Christ with the sun, and with divine Form is the backbone of the poem. He gives us a sense of the unity of all things in Christ: the vast, dualistic opposites of land and sea obtain "a universall Peace" through the Nativity:-

. . . Whispering new joyes to the milde Ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While Birds of Calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.³⁵

And, we are told of the offices of Pan and Cynthia as well as the effect of the Nativity on the demons of Satan. There are occasional lines of poetry which remind one of Spenser, but it is the consistency of the philosophical argument, the use of terms which Milton obviously believes are alive in themselves, the tendency to refer to mythological characters as an intricate part of his poetic expression - all these things which seem to recall Spenser. But even in this early poem we sense the epic voice playing with Spenserian elements (just as one senses the dramatic voice of Shakespeare's Spenserian poems). It is Milton who is in control: developing his own poetic voice.

But surely the most Spenserian poem of all is Comus: it is

34. Works, vol. II, ll. 8-14, p. 113.

35. Works, vol. II, ll. 66-68, p. 115.

as if Milton took certain episodes from the Faerie Queene and brought them to life on the stage. The subject matter, the setting, the descriptions, the details of imagery, all suggest the influence of Spenser. The subject is a discussion of the relationship of chastity to love, and we are reminded, more than once, of Busyrane's captivity of Amoret.

The setting is a Spenserian wood. It might recall the "wylde deserts" into which Serena fled (6.8.31.), or the forest which was placed near Castle Joyous, or the one in which Timias battled with the lustful Foster. Certainly, we are reminded of the Bower of Bliss because Comus degrades human nature by transforming people into animal shapes "According to their mindes like monstrous."

(2.12.85.):—

At last [Comus] betakes him to this ominous Wood,
And in thick shelter of black shaes imbaw'd,
Excells his Mother at her mighty Art,
Offering to every weary Travailer,
His orient liquor in a Crystal Glasse,
To quench the drouth of Phoebus, which as they taste
(For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst)
Soon as the Potion works, their human count'nance,
Th'express resemblance of the gods, is chang'd
Into some brutish form of Woolf, or Bear,
Or Ounce, or Tiger, Hog, or bearded Goat,
All otherparts remaining as they were,
And they, so perfect is their misery,
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
But boast themselves more comely then before
And all their friends, and native home forget
To roule with pleasure in a sensual stie. ³⁶

Milton's lesson is leading toward precisely these sentiments in the conclusion of the Bower episode (2.12.87.):—

Said Guyon, See the mind of beastly man,
That hath so soone forgot the excellence
Of his creation, when he life began,
That now he chooseth, with vile difference,

To be a beast, and lacke intelligence.
 To whom the Palmer thus, The donghill kind
 Delights in filth and foule incontinence:
 Let Grill be Grill, and haue his hoggish mind,
 But let vs hence depart, whilst wether serues and wind.

(2.12.87.)

We notice, also, that Comus employs art to degrade nature, and that he offers a drink which may recall the draught offered to Guyon by Excess (2.12.57.).

Throughout the masque the Spenserian voice resounds; and perhaps Milton, too, reflected on Arthur's raillery against night from the Faerie Queene when he penned these lines:-

. . . O theevish Night
 Why shouldst thou, but for som fellonious end,
 In thy dark lantern thus close up the Stars,
 That nature hung in Heav'n, and fill'd their Lamps
 With everlasting oil, to give due light
 To the misled and lonely Travailer? 37

The heroine is reminiscent of Britomart in the sense that her chastity provides her with a militant defence against the outrageous lust of Comus; but her circumstances associate her with the captivity of Amoret since her captivity is effected by an enchanter whose spells cannot apparently be reversed by any other than himself.

Thus, the Lady must find rescue in precisely the same way as Amoret:-

What, have you let the false enchanter scape?
 O ye mistook, ye should have snatcht his wand
 And bound him fast; without his rod revers't
 And backward mutters of dissevering power,
 We cannot free the Lady that sits here
 In stony fetters fixt, and motionless . . . 38

With the action apparently deadlocked, the spirit sent from Jove recalls the nymph Sabrina whose love for chastity is so great that she can reverse the charms if she is appealed to. Thus, Sabrina

37. Comus, Works, vol. II, ll. 61-77, pp. 177-178.

38. Comus, Works, vol. II, ll. 195-200, p. 181.

demonstrates the transcendent power of chastity to free the maiden from the power of intemperance. We recall Britomart's similar power to release Amoret from the House of Busyrane.

Milton learned much from Spenser, including the sense of when to make evil appealing to the reader by way of illustrating the temptations or powers of that evil. One might object that Acrasia, for example, is too attractive in her Bower, and that Spenser does injustice to his ethical and moral doctrines. But Acrasia cannot be understood unless we sense the temptations he offers. So it is with Comus. His argument for intemperance is beautifully phrased, and compelling in its immediate logic:-

Wherefore did Nature powre her bounties forth,
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,
Thronging the Seas with spawn innumerable,
But all to please, and sate the curious taste?³⁹

If Nature is not used to the full, she will be "strangl'd with her waste fertility;" (l. 729) and the "all-giver" would be unthanked and unpraised. Therefore, Comus argues, remember that beauty "is natures coyn."

If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
It withers on the stalk with languish't head.⁴⁰

In these arguments Milton is speaking with Spenserian accents. And yet, even as Spenser is at his best when he is easily drawing on a wide tradition and assimilating a wide number of sources, so it is with Milton. In Comus' arguments, and the Lady's rejection of them, we sense the strong influence of Spenser. But, clearly,

39. Comus, Works, vol. II, ll. 710-714, p. 195.

40. Comus, Works, vol. II, ll. 743-744, p. 195.

Milton has developed his own voice, nonetheless. He has taken the images and metaphors of the Rose tradition and the age-old theme of carpe diem, and fashioned an argument which reveals the influence of Spenser, but surpasses Spenser in its drama and power of expression. There is no new sentiment; no drastic advance, or deviation from the conclusions of the *Faerie Queene* (the Bower and Busyrane episodes, in particular). Perhaps Milton has attempted a rough synthesis of Shakespeare and Spenser, for the masque of Comus is rather like a dramatic recreation of an episode from the Faerie Queene.

The Lady's rejection of Comus draws on Spenser, for she rejects the argument that nature should impel people to serve her by a kind of excessive riot. One serves nature by a governed use. Milton was fond of making the distinction between licence and liberty, and he could have easily found Spenser to be of assistance in this argument. The Lady does not reject the pleasures of nature, but only the licence which would "devalue the coinage." There are similar arguments in Shakespeare's sonnets, and in fact, Adonis uses this same argument to rebuke Venus in Venus and Adonis. And, of course, our response as readers to the riotous condition of Castle Joyous is intended to evoke in us the same rejection of unrestricted nature. But it is not nature itself, or the pleasures of nature, which are rejected but simply the excessive use of nature: the licence which devalues the coinage.

In this thesis I have endeavored to understand Spenser's love philosophy. I have attempted to show that Spenser was, in this matter, of some influence on later literature. And I have tried to demonstrate that his influence was only unfortunate when we

trace it through minor poets who could not measure their minds against his. But others, like Shakespeare and Milton, certainly admired Spenser. They were strong enough to come under his influence without being overcome by the sheer weight of his genius. In each case, they were able to form their own poetic voices and to manage Spenser, rather than let Spenser manage them. It is therefore obvious that Edmund Spenser left an important legacy to literature, and that his unique place as an originator in poetry assures his title as the "prince of poets in his time."

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